Hafa Adai!

Torres gives a tour of $11.98M Route 36 Project. PAGE 2
Man arrested for sex offender registry violation. PAGE 3

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AT A GLANCE

As of 7:25pm, March 28, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated: 59.8%

Days since last community transmission 4

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	38,169
Fully Vaccinated:	37,380
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,348
Fully Vaccinated:	5,209
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,151
Additional Dose:	20,323

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,080	42	47,122
Recovered	45,733	159	45,892
Active	846	42	888
Deaths	340	2	342

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	11,022	0*	11,022
Recovered	10,850	0*	10,850
Active	139	0*	139
Deaths	33	0*	33

*No update

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

'2 NJ investors interested in offline, online Saipan casino'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom has disclosed that two New Jersey investors are interested in operating an offline and online casino on Saipan.

Yeom

Yeom said in an interview last Thursday that he recently received "officials calls" from these two separate investors that he described as "both legitimate."

Right now, he said, Saipan has only one exclusive licensee so he cannot do any open bidding and that he is not in a position to

See CASINO on Page 4

CUSTOMS AND BIOSECURITY ACADEMY

The Department of Finance's Division of Customs and Quarantine, in partnership with the Northern Marianas College, recently launched a Customs and Biosecurity academy with 20 cadets. As part of the academy training, the cadets will earn 40 college credits from NMC and will have the opportunity to earn additional credits to earn their college degrees. The courses will focus on Homeland and Border Security as well as Animal and Plant Identification against invasive species and pests to secure our borders. Present during the launch event were Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, Customs and Quarantine director Jose Mafnas, NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, and NMC Criminal Justice Department chair Clement Bermudes. NMC has similar partnership agreements with the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, and the Department of Corrections. NMC

CNMI working to acquire its own MRI unit

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. says it is working right now on obtaining new hospital equipment, including a new Magnetic Resonance Imaging unit that is used to take detailed pictures inside the human body to help diagnose or monitor treatment.

See CNMI on Page 4

Russia shifts focus to grind Ukraine's army

By NEBI QENA and YURAS KARMANAU
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—With its aspirations for a quick victory dashed by a stiff Ukrainian resistance, Russia has increasingly focused on grinding down Ukraine's military in the east in the hope of forcing Kyiv into surrendering part of the country's territory to possibly end the war.

The bulk of the Ukrainian army is concentrated in east-

See RUSSIA on Page 4

'Card is still best way for planned second local stimulus'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said Friday that there is no final update yet from the Department of Finance about the plan to release another round of local stimulus funds using the American Rescue Plan Act funding, but he believes using debit cards to do it is still the best way forward.

In response to an inquiry about the local stimulus during a radio news briefing, Torres said he is waiting to get more reports from Finance on the financial status. He said once he gets all the information, he will start releasing information to the community about the stimulus.

As to whether the administration is planning to use debit cards similar to the issuance of the first local stimulus, the governor conceded that they had some challenges with the cards during the first stimulus but, at the end of the day, they saw a positive outcome from using the cards.

"So we are trying to close the

See CARD on Page 4

Torres

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Without Russian help, climate scientists worry how they'll keep up their important work.

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ASIA
Chinese coast guard ships maneuvered dangerously close to Philippine coast guard ships.

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LIFE & STYLE
The Academy Awards name a crowd-pleaser, the deaf family drama "CODA," best picture.

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Local

Torres gives a tour of ongoing $11.98M Route 36 Project

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres gave the media a tour yesterday morning of the ongoing $11.98-million construction project that will improve the Windward Road near the Kingfisher Golf Links area in Talafofo going to Chalan Kalabera in the northeastern part of Saipan.

Torres first showed the construction of a large concrete box culvert that will greatly improve water drainage to the Unai Fanhang crossing that leads to Hidden Beach. The governor then checked the second large concrete box culvert at the Unai Nanasu crossing that leads to another Hidden Beach.

Torres, who has never been at either hidden beaches before, found them to be "very beautiful," prompting him to request the installation of parking spaces in the area so people can stop by and see the two beautiful beaches. "Now we are trying to add parking stalls here so our community and tourists can enjoy the beach behind us," he said.

Torres was accompanied during the tour by Public Works Secretary James Ada and engineers of contractor RNV Construction and construction manager GHD Inc.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, right, and Public Works Secretary James Ada, second from right, pose with construction engineers before Hidden Beach in Talafofo during a tour with the media yesterday morning.

The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. The Windward/Chalan Kalabera Road Improvement is Phase 2 of the overall project. DPW said they are doing Phase 2 first so that they can connect the culverts so that people can pass through to Bird Island. Phase 2 started on May 24, 2021 and its original completion date was May 23, 2022. The completion date now is either this August or September.

In an interview with the media, Torres said Route 36 will be Saipan's first interisland connecting road.

"It is good for everyone, for tourism, for the community, and extra location for bikers, walkers, [and] joggers from Kingfisher all the way to Bird Island connection," Torres said.

He said Phase 2 will connect the two crossings of Unai Fanhang and Unai Nanasu.

The governor said they are hoping to start work on Phase 1—the road that leads to Bird Island Lookout—in the next couple of months. They just have to wait for the bidding.

Torres said Route 36 is mostly federally funded; there is a local match but Torres is unsure how much is that.

He said Route 36 Project has been ongoing for over 20 years.

GHD Inc., a local/international engineering firm, is the construction managers for the Route 36 Project.

GHD Inc.'s Peter Babauta, who is a civil inspector for the Route 36 Project, said once the two box culverts are constructed, they are capable of mitigating and directing all the water from the different ravines uphill so there will be no issues with the road from mudslides and such.

"At the moment we are currently in the process of installing all the rebars for the culverts. [For] concrete pouring, we have scheduled it this week. I say we are currently roughly at 30% [completion]. Once we pour the concrete, we jump to 50%," Babauta said.

RNV Construction is the contractor of Phase 2.

RNV construction manager Moises Tagle Jr. said the culverts are the critical part of the project and that they trying to complete the box culverts this June.

Tagle said Phase 2 construction started in May 2021, but was delayed for three months due to environmental issues. He said DPW, however, granted them an extension because of the delay.

Once Route 36 is fully completed, Talafofo will become the second full-fledged link between the northern and southern parts of Saipan.

Phase 2's scope of work includes the construction and improvement of spans of road near the golf links going to Bird Island and the construction of two large concrete box culverts.

Talks to improve Route 36 have been ongoing since the 90's when former governor Juan N. Babauta was still the CNMI's resident representative in Washington D.C.

The project involves the construction of about 3.7 miles of an all-weather road on Route 36. The project will begin at the end of the existing paved road just past the entrance to the Kingfisher Golf Course, pass through Kalabera Cave, and end near the Bird Island lookout.

The road improvement will also include wider travel lanes with bike lanes on each side, drainage, road signage, and concrete box culverts.

With Route 36, cyclists, joggers, tourists, and the community will soon enjoy a safer alternative commute to the northern part of the island, according to DPW.

NORTHERN MARIANAS PACIFIC MINI GAMES 2022
Dream big. Lead your way to success!
Athletics has been a staple of every Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games sports program since the inception of the Games. It is always the case that Athletics draws the greatest number of countries entering of any sport in the Pacific Games, with nearly all 22 member countries always entering, reflecting its position as one of the Olympic Games two universality sports (Swimming being the other) where every country is offered an opportunity to participate. Typically, the medals are shared evenly between several countries with Fiji and Papua New Guinea particularly strong in the sprints, Polynesian powerhouses Samoa, Tahiti, and Tonga particularly strong in the field events, and New Caledonia strong everywhere. At the most recent Pacific Games in 2019, 11 of the 22 member countries won medals, as did Australia who were invited in the selected events.
ATHLETICS
NMI
QNB
SAPONG
DOHA2019
NIKE
GAME IS ON! June 17 - 25, 2022
Participating Countries 19
Competition Schedule 20 - 25 Jun 2022
Competition Venue Oleai Sports Complex Track & Field
Number of Athletes 309
*STOCK PHOTO ONLY
PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES
www.northernmarianas2022.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Sea conditions rough on small craft

A small craft advisory is in effect until 5pm Thursday. This means conditions will be hazardous to small craft.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, east winds of 15 to 25 knots, with gusts of up to 30 knots and seas of 8 to 10 feet will be occurring on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota coastal waters until 5pm CHST Thursday.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid navigating in hazardous conditions. ***(PR)***

Public warned of rip currents

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents through Wednesday afternoon along east facing reefs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents are present along east facing reefs of the Marianas until Wednesday afternoon. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

The public is advised to stay out of the water along east facing reefs. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

4.4-magnitude quake in Pagan region

At 1:05pm on March 24, 2022, a report of a 4.4-magnitude earthquake occurred 18.879°N 145.531°E of the Pagan region in the Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at (670) 237-8000. ***(PR)***

Bank of Saipan releases Part 2 of its financial literacy series

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Bank of Saipan launched yesterday Part 2 of its personal finance tutorial series at the bank's main branch and in their corporate headquarters.

Part of a series called "Dollars & Sense, a Guide to Personal Finance and Banking for Ages 7 to 107," the new video is titled "Dollars & Sense Episode II: Counting Money" and once more follows fictional characters Koku, Kaya, and their Nana on their journey to financial literacy.

This series is the first-ever all-local financial literacy video produced by Bank of Saipan for the CNMI, written by CNMI educators, and voiced by CNMI talents.

Episode one, titled "Introduction to Money Matters!" introduced the characters Koku, a fourth-grade boy played by voice actor Tahekide "TJ" Naputi; Kaya, a 13-year-old girl in the eighth grade and is Koku's first-cousin, played by voice actress Teihawny Villagomez; and Nana, Koku's and Kaya's grandmother, who is a retired accountant, played by voice actress Daisy Villagomez-Bier.

The video touched on the correct use of credit cards, the importance of knowing where your money comes from and how to prevent yourself from spending money that isn't available, or money you do not currently have.

Episode two builds upon the lessons of the first episode. In the second episode, 7-year-old Koku, this time voiced by Kainoa Tenorio, together with Kaya, voiced by Maili Peter, consults Nana, voiced by Priscilla T. Dela Cruz, his grandmother, a retired accountant, to help him count his piggy bank savings and to figure out if he has enough to open a bank account, or if it's just enough to buy some snacks.

Bank of Saipan president and chief executive officer John Z. Arroyo, who leads the bank's initiative to produce the "Dollars & Sense" videos, said that Bank of Saipan's effort to provide financial literacy through a series of short videos is unique, as it is specially created to appeal to consumers in the Northern Marianas.

"The 'Dollars & Sense' videos depict a local multigenerational family's journey to financial education. While the focus of the videos is on the local experience, the lessons imparted are universally applicable," Arroyo said.

Bank of Saipan is committed to provide financial support, direction, and banking expertise to produce the full series of videos for various age groups. The videos will provide useful information on money for all ages, from as young as 7 years to tweeners to high schoolers to college students and older adults.

Arroyo said, "The whole thing behind this is because there's a lot of things that we learn throughout life and one of the things that we don't really learn unless your parents cue in on this is about wise purchasing, wise savings decisions, and things like that."

It was learned that the videos feature animated characters to appeal to the young generation and their love of animé and manga. The series will be introduced to Mount Carmel School and then later in the next school year, the series is planned to be integrated into schools in the Public School System, which is still in the works.

The script of the videos was written by Daisy Villagomez-Bier, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.' Community Guidance Center program manager; Laura Kyonka, Public School System Mental Health Team-licensed professional counselor;, and Koniko Nakazato, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Special Education teacher.

The series' fruition is a collaboration between Villagomez-Bier, Kyonka, Nakazato, Bank of Saipan, Mount Carmel School, and the MCS Theater Club. Behind the scenes credit goes to Glimpses of Guam, Inc. which rendered the video production, illustration, animation, and editing.

The Part 1 video can be found on the Bank of Saipan YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6p5aKdWB8Q. For the second video, it can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foSzeEWFS-c.

Man arrested for sex offender registry violation

Albright

On Monday, March 28, 2022, the CNMI Department of Public Safety arrested Stephen E. Albright after finding that he had been in violation of sex offender registry requirements.

An arrest warrant was signed and issued by Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio for the charges of failing to update offender registration information and verification/appearance requirements with bail set at $10,000.

On the same date at about 3:32pm, Albright was arrested in the village of Lower Base before being transported to the Department of Corrections where he was booked and detained. ***(PR)***

Babauta to speak at Women's Summit

Babauta

Rep. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan) will be speaking at the 8th Annual CNMI Women's Summit today, March 29, where she hopes to empower women with three easy things they can do to lead the conversation on militarization in the Pacific.

The CNMI Women's Summit takes place at the Pacific Islands Club, where Babauta will deliver remarks titled "Women and Peace" and share how she learned about the ongoing militarization of the Pacific as an adult and the importance of effective communication.

"I'm excited to tell my story because it's important for us to learn about what's happening throughout the Pacific and right here [on] our islands. Women have always led the conversation about militarization and it's important that we are able to articulate it when we speak with local, regional, and leaders from around the world," she said.

Babauta's presentation begins at 8:45am and she will host one of the afternoon breakout sessions with her interns, Trini Iguel and Imaculada Litulumar, who will help the groups identify targets and objectives.

The Women's Summit on Saipan comes on the tail of Babauta's recent speaking engagement at the Future of Micronesia – Strategies for Resilience and Sustainability Conference when she shared her reflections from the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow, Scotland, where she delivered remarks and introduced former United States President Barack Obama.

The two-hour webinar was hosted and curated by Indigenous Pacific Islands Knowledge Universe through an academic partnership with the University of Pittsburgh.

For more information about registration or participation, contact Commonwealth Women's Association acting administrator Dorina Ogumoro-Iginoef (670) 233-8978 or email cwa.doiginoef@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

JOURNEY OF STRENGTH

STORIES FROM CANCER SURVIVORS

THELMA DUENAS
Breast Cancer Survivor

In 2015, I went for a routine checkup at the Women's Clinic because I was experiencing pain in my breasts. I immediately went through a biopsy. Once I received the news that I was diagnosed with cancer, I felt scared. I had seen and heard my family members having cancer and not surviving. After diagnosis and discussion with my doctor, I went to the Philippines to see an oncologist. I had to undergo several surgeries and chemotherapy treatment.

Before leaving, I had time to think about why I needed to be strong. My family influenced this. At the time, I was about to be a grandmother. I told myself that I needed to fight this cancer and return home to meet my first grandchild. So, I prepared myself physically and mentally, having positive thoughts about completing treatment and returning home.

Posttreatment, I continued going to follow-up appointments with my primary doctor and OB/GYN. Today, I am doing great despite the side effects of the surgeries and chemotherapy. My advice, especially to women, is to see a doctor regularly. Get screened, and don't wait for something wrong to happen or for things to get worse because it will be too late.

If you are a cancer survivor and would like to share your cancer journey, please contact the CHCC Non-Communicable Disease Bureau at (670) 236-8719.

"This project was supported by Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The contents are solely the responsibility of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC."

www.chcc.gov.mp @cnmipophealth @cnmichcc

Guam reports 2 COVID-19-related deaths; 42 new cases

Guam's Joint Information Center was notified yesterday of two COVID-19-related fatalities, plus 42 new cases covering the period from March 26 to 28.

Guam's 341st COVID-19-related fatality was pronounced dead on arrival at the Guam Memorial Hospital on March 25, 2022. The patient was a 78-year-old female, unvaccinated, who tested positive on March 26.

The 342nd COVID-19-related fatality was pronounced dead on arrival at GMH on March 28, 2022. The patient was a 66-year-old male, fully vaccinated with a booster, who tested positive on March 28.

"[First gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I pray for their family and friends during this most difficult time, that they find peace and comfort as we continue to battle this pandemic together as a community," said Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero in the JIC report.

Also, from March 26-28, 2022, the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services reported 42 new cases of COVID-19, 13 of which were identified through the Department of Defense. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Resolution requests premium pay for lawmakers' employees

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Senate joint resolution requesting Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig to use American Rescue Plan Act funds to provide premium pay for lawmakers' employees is on the agenda for action in today's House of Representatives' session.

Authored by Sen. Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), Senate Joint Resolution 22-07 was adopted by the Senate last March 3.

DeLeon Guerrero stated the legislation that lawmakers' employees are equally affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and they, too, deserve to receive premium pay, just like other government employees.

She pointed out that Commonwealth Ports Authority employees received a $5,000 bonus, Judiciary Branch employees got a $2,500 bonus, and Legislative Bureau employees had a $2,500 bonus. The senator said $1,000 was provided to 1,955 CNMI government employees who have worked at least 40 hours to directly mitigate the pandemic, as well as CNMI government employees who have worked to provide public servicers since the pandemic began.

She said 458 CNMI government front-liners who have worked on the front lines of the pandemic for at least 40 hours in directly mitigating COVID-19 also received $5,000 in premium pay.

DeLeon Guerrero noted that Atalig has shared publicly that the CNMI has expended about $3.6 million for premium pay in this first batch, and that the premium pay is not just for the Executive Branch or just the front-liners.

DeLeon Guerrero

RUSSIA

From Page 1

ern Ukraine, where it has been locked up in fighting with Moscow-backed separatists in a nearly eight-year conflict. If Russia succeeds in encircling and destroying the Ukrainian forces in the country's industrial heartland called Donbas, it could try to dictate its terms to Kyiv and, possibly, attempt to split the country in two.

The Russian military declared Friday that the "first stage of the operation" had been largely accomplished, allowing Russian troops to concentrate on their "top goal—the liberation of Donbas."

Many observers say the shift in strategy could reflect President Vladimir Putin's acknowledgment that his plan for a blitz in Ukraine has failed, forcing him to narrow his goals and change tactics amid a disastrous war that has turned Russia into a pariah and decimated its economy.

U.S. and British officials also have noted that Moscow has increasingly focused on fighting the Ukrainian forces in the east while digging in around Kyiv and other big cities and pummeling them with rockets and artillery.

The chief of Ukrainian military intelligence, Kyrylo Budanov, said Sunday the change of focus could reflect Putin's hope to break Ukraine in two, like North and South Korea, and enforce "a line of separation between the occupied and unoccupied regions."

"He can't swallow the entire country," Budanov said, adding that Russia appears to be trying "to pull the occupied territories into a single quasi-state structure and pit it against independent Ukraine."

Putin and his generals haven't revealed specific military goals or a planned timeline, but the Kremlin clearly expected a quick victory when Russian troops rolled into Ukraine from the north, east and south on Feb. 24.

But the Russian attempts to swiftly capture the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, the country's second-largest city, Kharkiv, and other big cities in the northeast have been thwarted by well-organized Ukrainian defenses and logistical challenges that stalled the Russian offensive.

Russian forces have pounded the outskirts of Kyiv with artillery and air raids from a distance while putting their ground offensive on hold, tactics they also have used in attacking Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Sumy in the northeast.

In some sectors, including the city of Makariv that sits near a strategic highway west of Kyiv, Ukrainian troops have pushed the Russians back.

Associated Press reporters saw the carcass of a Russian rocket launcher, a burned Russian truck, the body of a Russian soldier and a destroyed Ukrainian tank after the fighting there a few days ago. In the nearby village of Yasnohorodka, the AP witnessed positions abandoned by Ukrainian soldiers, who moved farther west, but no sign of Russian troops' presence.

Mykola Sunhurovskyi, a military analyst at the Kyiv-based Razumkov Center think tank, said Russia has abandoned attempts to storm Kyiv and other big Ukrainian cities for now and is laying siege to them to try to weaken Ukraine and win time.

"Russia has shifted tactics ... to redistribute its forces and prepare for the next active stage of the war," Sunhurovskyi said.

The Russian forces encircled the key strategic port of Mariupol and besieged it for weeks, hammering it with rockets and artillery in a carnage that killed thousands of civilians. The fall of Mariupol would free up Russian forces there and allow them to engage in a potential pincer movement together with another group of troops moving from Kharkiv in the northeast to try to encircle the Ukrainian military in the east.

"Russian forces appear to be concentrating their effort to attempt the encirclement of Ukrainian forces directly facing the separatist regions in the east of the country, advancing from the direction of Kharkiv in the north and Mariupol in the south," the British Ministry of Defense said Sunday.

A senior U.S. defense official also noted the latest Russian focus on Donbas. The official said Putin may now hope to take full control of the east while keeping other Ukrainian forces occupied with the defense of Kyiv and other areas and then try to pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to formally surrender control over Donbas and recognize Russia's ownership of Crimea, which Moscow annexed in 2014.

An analysis published Saturday by the Institute for the Study of War in Washington said the degree to which the Russians can push an accelerated move to cut off Donbas will depend in part on how soon their forces can gain full control of Mariupol and how badly damaged they emerge from that fight. It also noted that a halt in the Russian offensive on Kyiv could reflect "the incapacity of Russian forces rather than any shift in Russian objectives or efforts at this time."

AP
A Ukrainian Army soldier inspects fragments of a downed aircraft in Kyiv, Ukraine, Friday, Feb. 25, 2022.

CARD

From Page 1

gap of the challenges but, at the end of the day, I think the card is the best way," he said.

The governor said with cards, one can use the stimulus for every opportunity, decision, or options, as long as the vendor's merchant number is registered in the CNMI.

Torres earlier disclosed that the community should be expecting additional assistance and that it would be more than $500.

CASINO

From Page 1

talk more about these investors until the situation with Saipan casino licensee Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is resolved.

Yeom said he could not get into the specifics whether these investors want to take over IPI's casino building in Garapan or use any existing properties. "I cannot get into that type of deep-level discussion," he said.

The CCC board plans to hold hearings this May whether or not to revoke IPI's exclusive casino license.

Yeom has levied five complaints against IPI in September 2021, each one seeking the immediate revocation of IPI's exclusive Saipan casino license. The complaints accuse IPI of unwillingness to comply with the CCC's final order in five enforcement actions that were previously entered against IPI.

The Superior Court recently affirmed the CCC's order suspending IPI's exclusive casino license.

CNMI

From Page 1

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said during a recent news briefing that building new facilities at the hospital as well as expanding existing once is in the works. "We're working with the Governor's Office on that. The only challenge, of course, is that it will take a lot more time," she said.

However, the project is still in its planning phase so CHCC has yet to determine when the project will start and when it would be completed. Because it is such a large-scale project, Muña said that CHCC will prioritize certain areas first. The focus for now will be to expand the CHCC operating room, add more suites, expand the intensive care unit, add a multi-level parking structure, expand the existing dietary unit and, most importantly, building a place to house an MRI.

"This is an investment in public health. We're planning on placing an MRI unit across the street so it is still close to the hospital. We definitely need an MRI. Obviously, diabetes, hypertension, [and] cardiovascular illnesses are some of our top cases here in the CNMI and we need to be able to diagnose early and treat early, so an MRI is definitely necessary. Even with oncology, we have seen that there's a definite need for the MRI," she said.

Muña explained that CHCC and the CNMI administration is determined to upgrade the hospital as it is over 30-year-old and can no longer accommodate a population of over 50,000.

"The facility is over 30 years old and, at the time it was built, we had a population of about 15,000, so at this point in time, to have four ICU units just doesn't make sense. We're talking about a 76-bed hospital. With this population of 50,000 it's inadequate, it's insufficient. You need to be able to have more, and when we have patients waiting in the ER, for example, waiting for a bed, you know that that shouldn't be happening," she said.

Meanwhile, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said it is the administration's priority to get this project off the ground for the sake of public health.

"It is a priority of the CEO and this administration to prioritize our healthcare. My administration will definitely be prioritizing the need to expand our hospital, whether it's the emergency room, operating rooms, ICU, or the new building we want to build to house the MRI and CT scan as well as the hyperbaric chamber. We are working hard to meet the request on the need for the expansion," he said.

Man is found guilty of stalking ex-girlfriend

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found a man guilty of stalking his ex-girlfriend, among other charges, following a bench trial last week.

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan found Sergio M. Rangamar, 45, guilty of stalking in the second degree and disturbing the peace following a bench trial that ended on March 23.

Bogdan said that after considering the testimony of the witnesses, exhibits, and after hearing the arguments of counsels, he found the evidence presented proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt for stalking in the second degree, and disturbing the peace-domestic violence.

"This court is satisfied that the Commonwealth did prove beyond a reasonable doubt that defendant's course of conduct, a series of two or more acts, interfered with the victim to the point of causing her to fear for her safety and suffer emotional distress," he said.

The judge allowed Rangamar to wait out his sentencing under his pre-trial release conditions. He was ordered to return to court on May 26, at 10am for his sentencing hearing.

During the three-day bench trial, the court heard testimonies from five different witnesses.

The five witnesses testified that on several occasions, Rangamar had called up the victim at work, would show up at her job site randomly, and would even drive by her home to check on her.

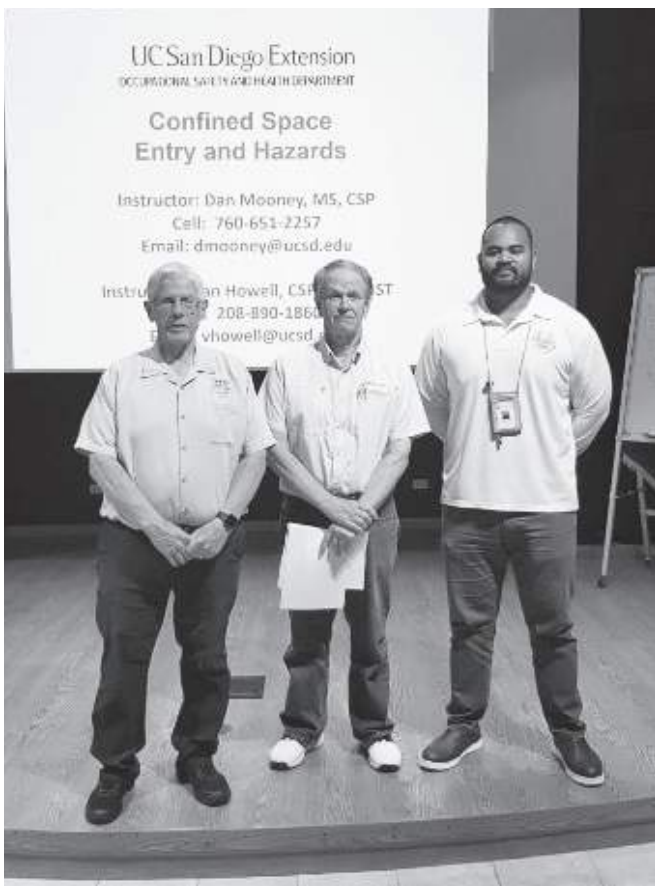
According to court documents, Rangamar's former girlfriend called the police to report that Rangamar used to beat her up when they were still together. She told police that she and Rangamar were in a relationship from 2011 to 2012 before he suddenly moved to the U.S mainland.

But them on May 8, while the victim was working a graveyard shift, Rangamar allegedly showed up at the Commonwealth Health Center emergency room at around 12am after allegedly lying that he needed medical attention. The victim claims he walked up to her work station to greet her "Happy Mother's Day" and leaned in for a hug, which she refused.

On May 10, the victim said she received a call from her sister, who told her that Rangamar had driven to her mother's house to contact her. A few days later, on May 14, while she was leaving CHC after her graveyard shift, the victim said she saw Rangamar standing in the parking lot near the emergency room so she immediately went back inside.

The victim also told police that she had been seeing the same vehicle outside her apartment for the past two weeks but was unsure whether it belonged to Rangamar because the person inside had the seat leaned back and wore a cap that covered the person's face. She later confirmed that it was indeed Rangamar after seeing the same vehicle at the gas station operated by Rangamar while wearing the same cap.

CNMI-OSHA hosts five confined space trainings



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The University of California San Diego, in partnership with CNMI Occupational Safety and Health Administration, conducts a Confined Space training at the American Memorial Park Auditorium.

The University of California San Diego, in partnership with CNMI Occupational Safety and Health Administration, conducted five Confined Space trainings across over the course of three days at the American Memorial Park Auditorium last March 21-23, 2022.

There were over 60 participants from both the private and public sector. The purpose of the course was to educate workers and employers of the hazards that come with working in and around confined spaces and the importance of a company's Rescue Plan.

OSHA On-Site Consultation program manager Tim Asaivao said, "The reception by the participants was positive and encouraging [despite] the challenges they continue to face since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. …CNMI OSHA's consultation program can assist with hazard identification and proper abatement techniques."

For more information regarding the program or to schedule a consultation contact the OSHA office, call Elaine Pangelinan at (670) 664-3156/6 or email e.pangelinan@dol.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 6th birthday to my beloved son, Collin. You are my everything. Greetings come from Mommy.

International Women's Month

Customers check out the Fiji and Polynesia booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Carolinian booth featured a colorful display during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

Representatives of the Carolinian Affairs Office pose for a picture during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Lady Diann Torres Foundation booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Philippines booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Philippines booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Chinese Association of Saipan booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The South Korea booth during the International Women's Month celebration at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

The Pohnpei booth during the celebration of International Women's Month at the CNMI Museum grounds last Thursday, March 24, 2022. LEIGH GASES

LEIGH GASES
Some of the participants in last Thursday's roadside waving were dressed in traditional garb.

MCT receives $6M donation from MacKenzie Scott

The Micronesia Conservation Trust, along with hundreds of other organizations around the world, has received a $6 million unrestricted grant award from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the former wife of Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos.

Scott made the announcement on her blogpost, Medium, on March 23, 2022. Many media stories have reported that Scott has donated $3.8 billion to 465 charities since June.

Scott

An MCT news release yesterday stated that the MCT board of trustees has authorized the creation of a Reserves Fund with the $6 million gift from Scott. The purposes of the Reserves Fund include: providing a long-term source of funds to meet unforeseen financial needs; providing a long-term source of funds for capital improvement projects; and funding, annually, partner proposals in accordance with locally determined priorities.

"This amazing and transformational gift will allow MCT to do the things we have not been able to do consistently (e.g., our own annual call for proposals, staff capacity development, just-in-time grants to support quick and innovative programs, and maybe even our own MCT building so we won't have to continue to pay rent)," said MCT executive director William Kostka. "This gift is testament to the hard work of our board and staff over the years, as well as that of our partners. The board and staff, and all the communities we serve across Micronesia convey our sincerest gratitude to Ms. Scott and her amazing team."

The MCT board and management plan to invest the award immediately and spend the remainder of 2022 completing its updated Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2027) and developing budgets, as well as policies and procedures to govern the Reserves Fund and the use of the revenues it will generate. This will ensure that MCT is positioned to deliver improved programs to stakeholders and communities across Micronesia. ***(PR/ Saipan Tribune)***

Australia, New Zealand worried by China's deal with Solomons

CANBERRA, Australa (AP)—The Australian and New Zealand prime ministers on Monday voiced concerns about the potential for a Chinese military presence on the Solomon Islands.

A document leaked last week indicates that China could boost its military presence in the South Pacific island nation, including with ship visits.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he had spoken to New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern over the weekend about the development and planned to speak to his counterparts in Papua New Guinea and Fiji later Monday.

"The reports that we've seen are not a surprise to us and are a reminder of the constant pressure and threats that present in our region to our own national security," Morrison told reporters.

"This is an issue of concern for the region but it has not come as a surprise. We have been long aware of these pressures," he added.

Ardern described the possibility of Chinese military forces stationed on the Solomons as "gravely concerning."

"We see such acts as the potential militarization of the region," she told Radio NZ. "We see very little reason in terms of the Pacific security for such a need and such a presence," she added.

Ardern urged Solomons' leaders "not to look beyond our own Pacific family" when considering the country's security relationships.

The Solomons revealed on Thursday it had signed a policing cooperation agreement with China. But more concerning to the Solomons' neighbors was the draft text of a broader security arrangement that was leaked online.

Under the terms of the draft agreement, China could send police, military personnel and other armed forces to the Solomons "to assist in maintaining social order" and for a variety of other reasons. It could also send ships to the islands for stopovers and to replenish supplies.

The draft agreement stipulates that China would need to sign off on any information that's released about joint security arrangements, including at media briefings.

Questioned about the agreement last week, China's Foreign Ministry said Beijing and the Solomons "conducted normal law enforcement and security cooperation on the basis of equal treatment and win-win cooperation."

It was not immediately clear when the security agreement might be finalized, signed or go into effect.

The Solomons, home to about 700,000 people, in 2019 switched its diplomatic allegiance from Taiwan to Beijing, which was a contributing factor to riots in November.

Australian police have been in the capital Honiara maintaining peace since then under a bilateral security treaty established in 2017. It provides a legal basis for the rapid deployment of Australian police, troops and associated civilians in the event of a major security challenge.

In 2017, when Australian police and troops left the Solomons after 14 years, the two countries signed a bilateral treaty that would enable Australians to return at short notice at the invitation of the Solomons' prime minister. That treaty was invoked in November and Australian police were in the air within hours of Solomons Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare requesting help.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds)
March 14, 2022

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, Ms. Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane, wish to announce that its Annual Community Assessment (ACA) Report for Program Year 2020 is available for review.

The Report contains information regarding the CNMI's performance in addressing and fulfilling the Community Planning and Development (CPD) grant requirements.

The report is available on NMHC's website at www.nmhcgov.net and at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. Individuals needing special accommodations to review the report must contact the Planning Division for arrangements by calling (670) 234-7689/6866 during regular business hours.

/s/ Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman of the Board

SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

NOTICE OF REGULAR SHEFA BOARD MEETING

In accordance with 1 CMC § 9901 *et seq.*, as amended, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance (SHEFA) Board is hereby giving notice of its regular board meeting, to be held on March 30, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., Office of SHEFA conference room, 2nd Floor, CTC Building, Oleai, Beach Road, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes from February 23, 2022

II. Public Comment (s)
III. Committee Reports
a. Committee on Awards
b. Committee on Appeal/Deferments/ Forbearance
c. Committee on Policy and Procedures
d. Committee on Program and Development
e. Committee of Fiscal, Legislative, and Community Affairs
IV. Administrator's Report
V. Chairman's Report
VI. Old Business
1. Spring 2022 application status
VII. New Business
1. 2022 Budget Proposal
VIII. Executive Session
IX. Miscellaneous Matters
X. Next Meeting
XI. Adjournment

/s/ Oscar M. Babauta,
Chairman, Board of SHEFA Directors

EUCON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

JOB OPENING:

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Job Duties:
Provides instruction at the Secondary School level in the following classes: Fundamental Math, Algebra I and Geometry; creates lesson plans; evaluates student performance and provides feedback; communicates students' progress to parents; develops and updates curriculum for the classroom; maintains accurate records of students' progress; keeps order in the classroom; posts grades and sends grade reports to parents; performs other teaching-related duties.

Other requirements:
Baccalaureate degree in liberal arts, stem-science, or engineering; ability to communicate and interact with students and parents; ability to encourage and motivate students; basic computer and microsoft software skills; Chinese language skills preferred, as school instructs both native English and Chinese speaking students

Work Location: Eucon International School, Kulales Place, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai Mail Address: P.O. Box 500087, Saipan, MP 98950

E-Mail address: hr@eucon.edu

EUCON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

JOB OPENING:

ACCOUNTING CLERK

Duties:
The Accounting Clerk, receiving general guidance from the school's Finance Manager, performs general bookkeeping duties, including checking, computation, classifying and recording data to keep financial records; establishes and maintains chart of accounts and subsidiary accounts, allocating, and posting transactions; performs other bookkeeping and accounting assistance tasks.

Other requirements:
Must have a high school diploma/GED with at least 12 months of progressive work experience in the accounting clerk field with basic accounting and clerical skills and knowledge. Skill in Microsoft and QuickBooks software, math and English, and operating computer.

Work Location: Eucon International School, Kulales Place, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai Mail Address: P.O. Box 500087, Saipan, MP 98950

E-Mail address: hr@eucon.edu

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Republicans don't have to accept extremists' shoddy treatment of Jackson

Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee worked overtime to trip up Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson or capture a gotcha moment for the cameras during her marathon confirmation hearing this week. The spectacle was exhausting to watch, but like the nominees who went before her in recent years, Jackson handled the questions with dignity and aplomb—unlike her questioners.

Democrats have also had their share of low-blow attempts to defeat conservative Supreme Court nominees. Two notable examples are Brett Kavanaugh and Clarence Thomas, both of whom had to address direct testimony from women alleging sexual abuse or harassment. Sadly, Senate Judiciary Committee Republican extremists like Josh Hawley of Missouri and Ted Cruz of Texas now think it's their turn.

The broad experience that made Jackson such a strong choice as a nominee—she's served as a trial judge, public defender and even school board member—now provide ample sources of material to attack her. Hawley and Cruz seem intent on painting her as the boogeywoman incarnate.

As a trial judge, she handled child pornography cases. As a public defender, she represented a terrorism suspect. And as a board member at Washington's Georgetown Day prep school, Jackson is, in Cruz's eyes, responsible for every book in the library and every lesson taught. Thus, Jackson is not the embodiment of critical race theory.

As if to make it appear that he's not attacking Jackson because she's the first Black woman to be nominated to the Supreme Court, Cruz tried invoking the words of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Then he held up one of several Georgetown Day books and asked pointedly, "Do you agree with this book … that babies are racist?"

She replied, calmly, that such books and topics "don't come up [in] my work as a judge, which I am respectfully here to address." Which is exactly the point. Senators were so busy trying to create campaign-worthy video clips depicting their feigned outrage, they seemed far less concerned with the actual business of the Supreme Court.

When Hawley and others accused her of meting out soft sentences to child pornographers, she batted it right back: If senators want tougher sentences, Congress should pass tougher sentencing guidelines for judges like her to follow.

What's happening here is fairly obvious. Midterm elections are approaching. Hawley and Cruz are trying to raise their profiles ahead of the 2024 presidential race. These antics are directly aimed at a base heavily dominated by white men and women troubled by America's growing diversity. And Jackson is among the most high-profile symbols of

See REPUBLICANS on Next Page

HISTORY IS THE STORY OF THOSE WHO RISE TO THE OCCASION...
ZELENSKY
...AND THOSE THAT DON'T
LET'S CALL PUTIN NAMES.
BUT NOTHING TOO HARSH.
WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE HIM MAD.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, JOE?
I'M LEAVING THAT UP TO YOU.
N A T O
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How to lead with diplomacy, and not just in Ukraine

By ELIZABETH SHACKELFORD
Chicago Tribune

Elizabeth Shackelford is a senior fellow on U.S. foreign policy with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. She was previously a U.S. diplomat and is author of The Dissent Channel: American Diplomacy in a Dishonest Age.

President Joe Biden and his top foreign policy advisers have demonstrated how effective diplomacy can be in a crisis. They have worked tirelessly to build a powerful, coordinated response to Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine. Though this has not yet ended the war, it has greatly increased the cost to Putin.

It has also sucked up most of the oxygen in the White House, the National Security Council and the State Department. But other crises haven't abated in the meantime, from Yemen to Myanmar, Ethiopia to Afghanistan. If the State Department were better resourced and empowered, the United States could bring more robust, nonmilitary foreign policy solutions to many more complex conflicts around the world.

Diplomacy is the least risky and least costly foreign policy tool at our disposal, but it has taken a back seat for years to a military-first approach and budget, leaving us less prepared to provide the global, nonmilitary solutions required.

From global health risks and climate shock to armed conflict and authoritarianism, our interconnected world is becoming less safe, not more. We need to be prepared to face these challenges. But when the war in Ukraine began, the State Department wasn't. The U.S. had no ambassador to Ukraine, and the senior positions for refugees, international security and nonproliferation, and sanctions policy all sat empty.

Biden has spoken about leading with diplomacy, but there are few signs so far of institutional change. Here are some places this administration could start.

The State Department needs more money. Biden says often, "Show me your budget and I'll tell you what you value." If he truly values diplomacy as a tool of first resort, his budget should reflect it.

The Pentagon's budget reached historic levels this year, at $768 billion. The foreign affairs budget, which covers the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development, was about 7% that amount at $58 billion. (An additional $7 billion was set aside for Ukraine's emergency funding.)

As a U.S. diplomat, I frequently saw the impact of insufficient funding. For example, in South Sudan, we didn't have enough vehicles, so I often missed important events because I couldn't get a ride. We didn't have enough staff, so I had two full-time jobs, which meant long hours and hard conditions even before a war broke out. Facility repairs took so long that a large section of our perimeter wall collapsed in a heavy rain—a dangerous predicament in a conflict zone.

The State Department also needs empowerment to lead. The National Security Council inside the White House has in many ways replaced the State Department as the premier foreign affairs agency. The State Department today has a seat at the table when the NSC chairs meetings on foreign policy, but the Pentagon literally has two—representing both the military and civilian sides of the Department of Defense. If State were leading and shaping these discussions from the start, the U.S. would be more likely to lead with diplomacy.

The State Department should also have fewer political appointments. These are the outsiders—sometimes true policy experts, sometimes just pals of the president—who land positions typically for their political support. The State Department has five times as many political appointees as the Department of Defense and 10 times more than any other federal agency. This means State incurs more gaps in staffing with each change in administration than any other agency, harming continuity in our foreign policy and promoting a short-term perspective of foreign policy problems on a political timeline.

Much has been written about big-money donors given plush ambassador postings, a practice no other developed nation uses. But political appointees fill hundreds of other non-ambassadorial positions across the State Department too, in both policy roles and supporting positions. While many have subject-matter expertise, this practice limits the professional path of career diplomats, which has led to high attrition, and that depletes the cultural, historical and linguistic resources they have developed through years of service.

Finally, the State Department has some work to do internally to pave the way for more creative solutions. The department has a history of homogeneity—"male, pale and Yale." It looks more diverse today than a few decades ago, but leadership positions remain woefully nondiverse. Improved diversity not only builds a diplomatic corps more reflective of America, but more diverse experiences and backgrounds help bring forward more diverse ideas. President Biden established State's first Office of Diversity and Inclusion, which is a strong start. To succeed, this office

See UKRAINE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

FSM's Panuelo appeals to Xi to call for cessation of hostilities in Ukraine

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—Federated States of Micronesia President David W. Panuelo has written to People's Republic of China President Xi Jinping, soliciting China's support to call for the Russian Federation's withdrawal from, and cessation of hostilities in, Ukraine, and further to put the world at large on a path to peace.

The text of Panuelo's March 28, 2022, letter is below and a PDF to the diplomatic note can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/President_Panuelos_Ltr_to_President_Xi_Jinping.pdf

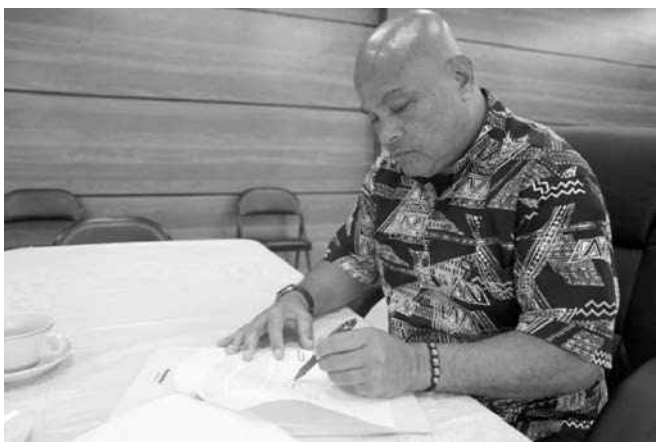
■■■

President Xi,

I write to you today with humility in my heart. At this hour, a weary and distraught humanity is in need of champions for peace. Nations must work together now to lead us into the paths of peace.

Approximately one month ago, the Russian Federation brutally invaded Ukraine without provocation or justification. In the month of war so far, the Russian Federation has engaged in numerous war crimes, including the murder of innocent civilians and the destruction of infrastructure such as hospitals and schools. There have been reports of white phosphorous and other extraordinarily harmful material being used for no reason other than to extinguish precious human lives; and, of course, the Russian Federation has frequently raised the specter of using nuclear weapons. There is no nuance in Russia's behavior; they are choosing to act as villains.

Due to our nation's unwavering commitment to peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity, we felt it was necessary to demonstrate our firm protest of the Russian Federation's unnecessary war and invasion of Ukraine by severing our diplomatic relations with them until such a time that the Russian Federation can show an actionable commitment to these values. Our country knows all too well what it's like to be controlled by foreign powers, whether it be the Spanish and German Empires in the 19th century, the Japanese Empire after World War I and prior to World War II, or the American Empire shortly thereafter. In other words, nations have forgotten the lessons learned from the tragedies of the last century, the sacrifice of the millions who fell in the two world wars. Nations have disregarded the commitments we have made for the world community. We have betrayed peoples' dreams of peace, and the hopes of the young and the vulnerable. We have stopped being our neighbors' keepers and stewards of our common humanity.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Federated States of Micronesia President David Panuelo signs his letter to China President Xi Jinping, wherein he solicits China's support in asking the Russian Federation to cease hostilities and withdraw from Ukraine.

The Federated States of Micronesia is committed to peace, and recognizes and appreciates that China feels precisely the same way, because China fought—with diplomacy, not weapons—at the United Nations for our country to become sovereign and internationally recognized, among other countries.

It is increasingly clear to the Federated States of Micronesia that the Russian Federation—perhaps due to its historical and ideological differences with the United States of America and its partners— has no interest in ending its war in Ukraine any time soon, despite increasing pressure from the U.S. and Europe. It is even possible that the more the U.S.-side and European-side increase their pressure on the Russian Federation that the latter will only feel more empowered to engage in violence.

I believe now is the appropriate time for the People's Republic of China to demonstrate its global leadership by calling on the Russian Federation to cease hostilities and withdraw from Ukraine. I am advised that this would be consistent with the 2013 PRC-Ukraine Treaty of Friendship & Cooperation, whose Articles 5, 6, and 7 describe China's and Ukraine's commitments to each other, including the unwavering support of China's territorial integrity on behalf of Ukraine, and China's support of Ukraine's territorial integrity.

President Xi, speaking personally and frankly, of all the reasons I do not like Russia's war in Ukraine it is because it suggests that war between countries is something that can still happen today. It would be my preference that all countries embrace peace. The Chinese, as paragon examples of peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity, I believe can and should rise to the occasion to call for the cessation of hostilities. While I worry that the Russians and Americans will not listen to each other, I am convinced that both of them would listen to China, and I also believe that China taking on this leadership role would be in the interest of both the Federated States of Micronesia and the global community of nations.

President Xi, I take this opportunity to first thank you for considering my request, and secondly to reaffirm our nation's firm and unwavering commitment to our great friendship.

The battle of Russia has begun

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service*, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.*

Vladimir and Yevgenia are two fervently patriotic Russians in their 60s who are consumed these days, in very different ways, by what is happening to the desperate but valiant ordinary people of Ukraine.

Yet it is not at all clear which one the Russian people would really agree with—if they could ever get the true facts about what is really happening in Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin derives consummate satisfaction and vindication every time his generals and elite weapons specialists achieve his goal of civilian devastation without leaving their safe sanctuaries 10 or maybe 100 miles from their target—or even without leaving Russia. They simply fire artillery, rockets or missiles that soar over Ukraine for miles, smash homes, apartments, hospitals, schools and shops—and successfully slaughter and maim Ukrainian women, children, infants, elderly and infirm where they were helplessly huddling, hoping only to survive. It is inhuman, but far better than using Russian ground convoys that stall, run out of fuel and food, and end up with demoralized troops deserting or becoming easy prey for determined Ukrainians protecting their homeland.

Yevgenia Albats, a veteran journalist in Putin's Moscow who refuses to abandon her job, has her online sources and has seen all the above reality. She is the editor of an independent magazine, The New Times. She also still has a YouTube channel where she reports to Russians what their military is really doing inside Ukraine.

She is the best of our news business and is among the best of Russia's true patriots. And she wants you to know why she insists on braving Putin's fury—risking being jailed, or worse—just so she can report to fellow Russians the truth about their president's blizzard of Ukraine lies.

She had the guts to go on CNN's "Reliable Sources" show on March 13 to prove to you and the world that there still are patriotic Russians who believe in democracy and humanity.

"I wake up in the middle of the night and ask myself, is it really happening to us?" she said. "Is it really happening that Russian troops are killing Ukrainians? … My father fought during World War II in Ukraine, in the city of Mykolaiv … where there are heavy shellings and … bombardment going on right now. And that's what makes me absolutely sick."

State television, print and websites repeat Putin's blatant falsehoods. Among them: Ukraine's government is made up of "neo-Nazis" (yes, he really, repeatedly says that!) who are a threat to Russia (that too!). Many journalists have quit rather than mouth Putin's lies as if they were his ventriloquist dummies. Russians who are not internet-savvy have no news sources that will tell them the truth. Not surprisingly, Russia's younger population and the better-educated Russians can still find accurate news reports.

But Albats soldiers on, waging combat with the weapons she wields better than a barrel of Putin's generals.

"I'm not a martyr, but I feel like somebody has to do that," she said. " … I'm trying to be very careful. I'm an experienced journalist, so I know how to … speak between the lines and I'm trying to do it in a very careful way. I can tell you for sure I don't want to end up in jail."

Why does she risk Putin's retribution so she can bring the truth to her fellow Russians?

"I am so ashamed for my country," Albats said. " … I am ashamed that my taxes go into bombs that kill people in Ukraine. " … I've been to Ukraine many, many times when I was a kid … when I was a reporter, when I was an editor. ...

"When I see photos from Ukraine I feel deadly shame. …I want to get on my knees and say I'm so sorry…my country is doing this to you guys. …I totally failed...with this regime. …We totally failed to stop them."

Maybe not totally. Maybe just temporarily. What Vladimir Putin has mainly accomplished is that he is in fact shattering life in Russia just as surely as he is shattering the buildings of Ukraine's beautiful cities. Because of Putin's actions, Russia has been blackballed from the global economy and the global banking system.

Russians will soon see, and feel, the painful reality that Putin's presidency has destroyed what could have been a prosperous partnership in a welcoming global economy.

In their balloting or just in their streets, Russia's fed-up voters may yet have the final say. And the courage of journalists such as Yevgenia Albats may turn out to be their bridge over Putin's troubled, roiled waters.

REPUBLICANS

From Page 8

that diversity.

Moderate Republican senators don't have to accept this shoddy treatment as representative of their party. A strong bipartisan vote of approval for Jackson is the best way to counter extremism and send Hawley and Cruz back to the caves where they belong.

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UKRAINE

From Page 8

must address not only hiring but also entrenched biased practices that impede retention and promotion of diverse staff.

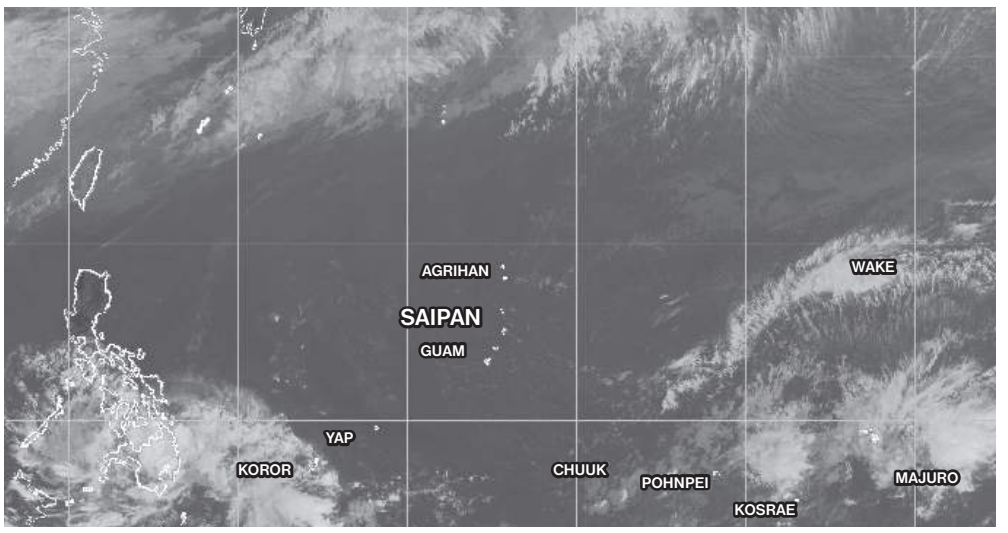
The West's response to Russia's war in Ukraine proves that nonmilitary foreign policy tools can be powerful, but dysfunctional treatment of the State Department remains an impediment to leading with diplomacy. Just imagine how an empowered State Department could shape similarly robust responses in the rest of the world.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
86º 76º	86º 76º	85º 76º	85º 76	85º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:00 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly cloudy skies with isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters today. However, a couple hundred miles to the east, it also shows a series of weak trade-wind disturbances that are interacting with the Tropical Upper Tropospheric Trough to make scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. These are expected to begin rolling into the Marianas and surrounding waters tonight, but this afternoon isn`t out of the question. The buoys reveal combined seas of 8 to 10 feet composed mainly of east-northeast trade-wind swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	AM Thunderstorms/Wind	30 / 25 °F
Palau	Partly Cloudy	29 / 26 °F
Yap	Partly Cloudy	30 / 26 °F
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	29 / 26 °F
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Majuro	Thunderstorms	27 / 25 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:15 AM	18:28 PM
Wednesday	06:14 AM	18:29 PM
Thursday	06:13 AM	18:29 PM
Friday	-	-
Saturday	-	-

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Tuesday	04:06	15:50 PM	-
Wednesday	04:50	16:46 PM	-
Thursday	05:31	17:40 PM	-
Friday	-	-	-
Saturday	-	-	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	24 / 17 °F
Beijing	AM Rain	14 / 6 °F
Hong Kong	Cloudy	22 / 21 °F
Honolulu	Cloudy	28 / 21 °F
London	Mostly Sunny	10 / 4 °F
Los Angeles	Light Rain	20 / 12 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	35 / 26 °F
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	24 / 15 °F
Miami	Sunny	26 / 19 °F
New York	Sunny	0 / -4 °F
Osaka	AM Clouds/PM Sun	14 / 7 °F
Paris	PM Rain	22 / 11 °F
Busan	Sunny	13 / 7 °F
Rome	Partly Cloudy	20 / 7 °F
Salem	Partly Cloudy	23 / 10 °F
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	15 / 9 °F
Seoul	Sunny	14 / 0 °F
Tokyo	PM Showers	15 / 8 °F
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	6 / -5 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
06:32 AM	High Tide	1.84
12:16 PM	Low Tide	0.97
5:19 PM	High Tide	1.74
-	Low Tide	-

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 28, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:40AM	7:20AM	1, 3, 5
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	2, 4, 6, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:35AM	8:35AM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:40AM	9:10PM	1, 3, 5 via Guam
UA117/193	6:40AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	2, 4, 6, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

S112	3:15PM	7:00PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	6
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	3
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	2:00PM	5:20PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:00AM	5:45AM	1, 3, 5
UA116	8:00AM	8:45AM	6, 7
UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	2, 4

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:35PM	4:35AM+1	2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:05AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/116	10:25PM	5:45AM+1	2, 4, 7 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/116	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	6 via Guam
UA192/116	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/116	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

RS111	8:15AM	1:35PM	3, 6
7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
7C3406	8:50AM	2:30PM	3
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	8:00AM	1:00PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Biden budget seeks minimum tax on households worth $100M

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden intends to propose a minimum tax of 20% on households worth more than $100 million and cut projected budget deficits by more than $1 trillion over the next decade, according to a fact sheets released Saturday by the White House budget office.

The introduction of the minimum tax on the wealthiest Americans would represent a significant reorienting of the tax code. It would apply to the top 0.01% of households with half of the expected revenue coming from households worth $1 billion or more. The minimum tax would effectively prevent the wealthiest sliver of America from paying lower rates than families who think of themselves as middle class, while helping to generate revenues to fuel Biden's domestic ambitions and keep the deficit in check relative to the U.S. economy.

In his proposal expected Monday, the lower deficits also reflect the economy's resurgence as the United States emerges from the pandemic. It's a sign that the government's balance sheet will improve after a historic burst of spending to combat the coronavirus.

Biden

The fading of the pandemic and the growth has enabled the deficit to fall from $3.1 trillion in fiscal 2020 to $2.8 trillion last year and a projected $1.4 trillion this year. That deficit spending paid off in the form of the economy expanding at a 5.7% pace last year, the strongest growth since 1984. But inflation at a 40-year high also accompanied those robust gains as high prices have weighed on Biden's popularity.

For the Biden administration, the proposal for the budget year that begins Oct. 1 shows that the burst of spending helped to fuel growth and put government finances in a more stable place for years to come as a result. One White House official, insisting on anonymity because the budget has yet to be released, said the proposal shows that Democrats can deliver on what Republicans have promised before without much success: faster growth and falling deficits.

Yet the Biden budget would pledge to do so through a kind of wealth tax that many Republicans say would hurt the economy by diminishing private investment in companies that create jobs and cause the wealthy to put their fortunes to work abroad.

Republican lawmakers have said that the Biden administration's spending over the past year has led to greater economic pain in the form of higher prices. The inflation that came with reopening the U.S. economy as the closures from the pandemic began to end has been amplified by supply chain issues, low interest rates and, now, disruptions in the oil and natural gas markets because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky pinned the blame solely on Biden's coronavirus relief as well as his push to move away from fossil fuels.

"Washington Democrats' response to these hardships has been as misguided as the war on American energy and runaway spending that helped create them," McConnell said last week. "The Biden administration seems to be willing to try anything but walking back their own disastrous economic policies."

War shakes Europe path to energy independence and climate goals

BERLIN (AP)—Before Russia's war in Ukraine, Europe's most pressing energy policy goal was reducing carbon emissions that cause climate change.

Now, officials are fixated on rapidly reducing the continent's reliance on Russian oil and natural gas—and that means friction between security and climate goals, at least in the short term.

To wean itself from Russian energy supplies as quickly as possible, Europe will need to burn more coal and build more pipelines and terminals to import fossil fuels from elsewhere.

This dramatic shift comes amid soaring fuel costs for motorists, homeowners and businesses, and as political leaders reassess the geopolitical risks from being so energy-dependent on Russia.

In 2021, the European Union imported roughly 40% of its gas and 25% of its oil from Russia—an economic relationship that officials had thought would prevent hostilities, but is instead financing them.

While some are calling for an immediate boycott of all Russian oil and gas, the EU plans to reduce Russian gas imports by two-thirds by the end of this year, and to eliminate them altogether before 2030.

This "will not be easy," said Paolo Gentiloni, the EU's top economic official. But, he added, "it can be done."

In the near-term, ending energy ties with Russia puts the focus on securing alternative sources of fossil fuels. But longer term, the geopolitical and price pressures stoked by Russia's war in Ukraine may actually accelerate Europe's transition away from oil, gas and coal.

Experts say the war has served as a reminder that renewable energy isn't just good for the climate, but also for national security. That could help speed up the development of wind and solar power, as well as provide a boost to conservation and energy-efficiency initiatives.

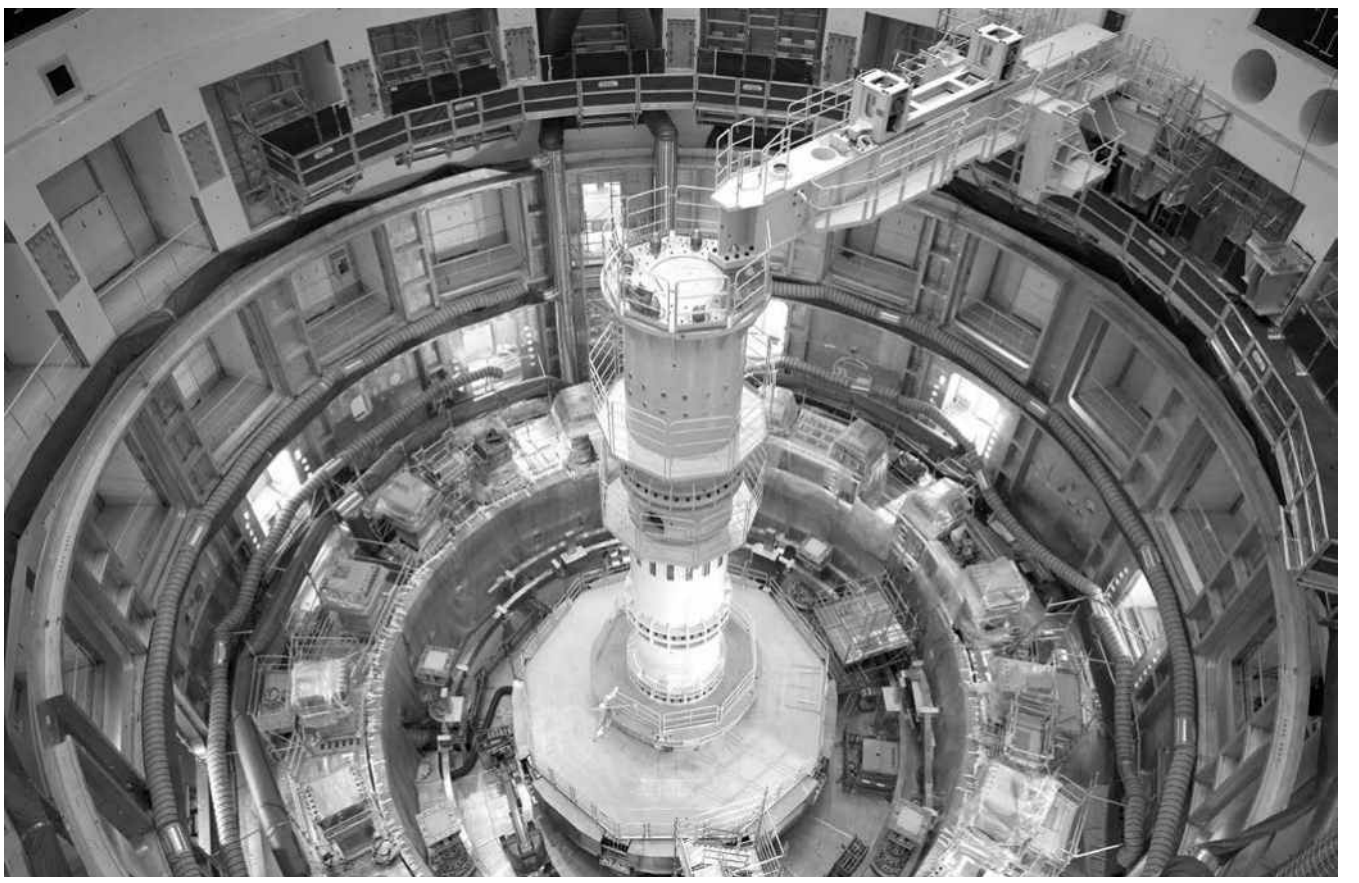
The EU has pledged to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 55% compared with 1990 levels by 2030, and to get to net zero emissions by 2050. Analysts and officials say those goals, enshrined in EU climate legislation, can still be met.

The rapid pursuit of energy independence from Russia will likely require "a slight increase" in carbon emissions, said George Zachmann, an energy expert at the Bruegel think tank in Brussels. But "in the long term, the effect will be that we will see more investment in renewables and energy efficiency in Europe," Zachmann said.

AP

A pumpjack extracts crude at an oil field in Emlichheim, Germany, March 18, 2022.

Without Russia, science going solo on world's woes, dreams


The ITER Tokamak machine is pictured in Saint-Paul-Lez-Durance, France, Sept. 9, 2021. AP

PARIS (AP)—Without Russian help, climate scientists worry how they'll keep up their important work of documenting warming in the Arctic.

Europe's space agency is wrestling with how its planned Mars rover might survive freezing nights on the Red Planet without its Russian heating unit.

And what of the world's quest for carbon-free energy if 35 nations cooperating on an experimental fusion-power reactor in France can't ship vital components from Russia?

In scientific fields with profound implications for mankind's future and knowledge, Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine is causing a swift and broad decaying of relationships and projects that bound together Moscow and the West. Post-Cold War bridge-building through science is unraveling as Western nations seek to punish and isolate the Kremlin by drying up support for scientific programs involving Russia.

The costs of this decoupling, scientists say, could be high on both sides. Tackling climate change and other problems will be tougher without collaboration and time will be lost. Russian and Western scientists have become dependent on each other's expertise as they have worked together on conundrums from unlocking the power of atoms to firing probes into space. Picking apart the dense web of relationships will be complicated.

The European Space Agency's planned Mars rover with Russia is an example. Arrays of Russian sensors to sniff, scour and study the planet's environment may have to be unbolted and replaced and a non-Russian launcher rocket found if the suspension of their collaboration becomes a lasting rupture. In that case, the launch, already scrubbed for this year, couldn't happen before 2026.

"We need to untangle all this cooperation which we had, and this is a very complex process, a painful one I can also tell you," the ESA director, Josef Aschbacher, said in an Associated Press interview. "Dependency on each other, of course, creates also stability and, to a certain extent, trust. And this is something that we will lose, and we have lost now, through the invasion of Russia in Ukraine."

International indignation and sanctions on Russia are making formal collaborations difficult or impossible. Scientists who became friends are staying in touch informally but plugs are being pulled on their projects big and small. The European Union is freezing Russian entities out of its main 95 billion euro ($105 billion) fund for research, suspending payments and saying they'll get no new contracts. In Germany, Britain and elsewhere, funding and support is also being withdrawn for projects involving Russia.

In the United States, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology severed ties with a research university it helped establish in Moscow. The oldest and largest university in Estonia won't accept new students from Russia and ally Belarus. The president of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, Tarmo Soomere, says the breaking of scientific connections is necessary but also will hurt.

Nation

Colorado wildfire forces evacuation orders for 19,000 people

BOULDER, Colo. (AP)—Authorities issued an evacuation order for 19,400 people Saturday near a fast-moving Colorado wildfire in rolling hills south of the college town of Boulder, not far from the site of a destructive 2021 blaze that leveled more than 1,000 homes.

The wildfire was fueled by wind earlier in the day and had grown to 122 acres (49 hectares) with no containment, Boulder Fire-Rescue spokesperson Marya Washburn said. The Boulder Office of Emergency Management said an overnight shelter was opened after evacuation orders covered 8,000 homes and 7,000 structures. No structures had been damaged.

Winds and temperatures have died down, Washburn said. Officials expect to be dealing with the fire for several days due to heavy fuels, said Boulder Fire-Rescue Wildland Division Chief Brian Oliver.

The fire is in an area where a blaze destroyed 1,000 homes last year in unincorporated Boulder County and suburban Superior and Louisville. Superior town officials told residents in an email that there were no immediate concerns for the community.

The 2021 blaze burned Alicia Miller's home, where she could see smoke from Saturday's fire rising in the background. She posted a photo on Twitter and referenced climate change, which has made the U.S. West warmer and drier in the past 30 years and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more destructive, according to scientists.

Miller said her neighbors helped her escape along with her husband, Craig, their three adult sons and two dogs, Ginger and Chloe. She said the hardest losses from the blaze were things they didn't look at much, like baby shoes, family pictures and letters from her grandmother.

"I feel exhausted by all of this, and I just feel like enough as far as these fires and disasters," she said. She pointed to a recent Texas wildfire that left a deputy dead and homes destroyed. " ... So I'm standing there and it's just kind of a repeat."

Saturday's fire started around 2 p.m. and burned protected wildland near the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder police said. Authorities have called it the NCAR fire and its cause is not yet known, said Washburn.

Online video shows girl fatally shooting cousin and herself

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Two young cousins were livestreaming from a St. Louis apartment when one child fatally shot the other before killing herself in what family members say was a tragic accident.

Police are still investigating Friday's incident in which a 12-year-old girl, Paris Harvey, shot a 14-year-old boy, Kuaron Harvey, before shooting herself. Police initially described it as a murder-suicide.

The girl's grandmother, Susan Dyson, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that she saw the Instagram Live video the two cousins were making together at a downtown St. Louis apartment the family had rented to celebrate March birthdays.

"It wasn't a situation where they were arguing or anything like that," said Dyson, who is from the Dallas area. "They were playing with the gun, when they shouldn't have been. Of course, they shouldn't have been doing it. I think it just went off. It went off by mistake."

Family members said the cousins had been raised close together. Kuaron's mother and Paris' father are siblings.

Paris and Kuaron were alone in a bathroom making a video in the mirror before the shooting happened. Family members said that after Kuaron was shot, the video showed Paris reaching for the gun and it may have accidentally gone off again. They said they believed the gun was Kuaron's. Both children were shot in the head.

"It was no murder. It wasn't a suicide," said Shinise Harvey, 35, Paris' mother. "It was a freak accident. It happened."

Harvey said she had not seen the video but family members had described it to her. She said the cousins were "trying to be too hip."

Paris and Kuaron Harvey were often together making videos and pulling pranks. Family members said Paris, who was one of nine children, was a funny seventh grader who loved getting her hair and nails done and had a beautiful voice. They described Kuaron as a goofy eighth grader who had long been able to do back flips.

Ukrainian students overseas fret about relatives, the future

Students Sophia Pavlenko, left, of Russia, and Masha Novikova, of Ukraine, prepare blini, the Eastern European-style crepes, to sell to fellow students in a dorm at the United World College, Sunday, March 12, 2022, in Montezuma, N.M. AP

MONTEZUMA, N.M. (AP)—At a boarding school in the Rocky Mountains, a group of Eastern European teenagers made crepes to raise money for the millions of people whose lives have been uprooted by Russia's war on Ukraine.

The students, studying at a pine-dotted campus in northern New Mexico, worry from a world away about their relatives in the war-torn region.

Masha Novikova, a 19-year-old student from central Ukraine, spent the night before on the phone with NGOs trying to get her mother and three younger siblings to Germany, and arguing with her mother about which would be more dangerous: staying put or hitting the road.

Novikova said she was dealing with a lot of tasks "teenagers do not usually face," as she grapples with the reality that her family's home might not exist in the way it once did.

"It ruins you from the inside," she said.

At the United World College campus, teenagers from 95 countries study as part of a network of schools dedicated to fostering understanding between cultures. The Russian-speaking students, including some from overseas as well as the sons and daughters of immigrants, have been united in horror over the invasion of Ukraine.

On a recent Saturday, a half-dozen of them gathered in a dormitory kitchen to make blini—the Eastern European-style crepes—to sell to fellow students.

"It's so hard to focus on (school) with exams approaching. We're still high school students. We're still trying to live our lives and we have a bunch of high school level issues and suddenly, like, war intervenes," said Alexandra Maria Gomberg Shkolnikova, 18, of Mexico City, whose family is from Russia and Ukraine.

United World College officials are exploring options for students from Russia and Ukraine to stay on campus or with alumni families if it's not safe to travel after graduation, said Victoria Mora, president of UWC in the U.S.

Students at the school are selected in part on their interest in world affairs, desire to share their cultures and empathy for others. UWC operates 18 schools across four continents, including the one in the U.S. Novikova learned about the program while on a volunteer trip in Irpin, Ukraine, where she met a student from the United World College of India.

ACROSS THE NATION

Ex-Albany bishop acknowledges covering up abuse allegations

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—The former bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany has acknowledged covering up allegations of sexual abuse against children by priests in part to avoid scandal and protect the reputation of the diocese. Howard J. Hubbard made the admission during a deposition taken last year as part of a response to dozens of claims filed under New York's Child Victims Act. A judge ordered the deposition released on Friday.

Hundreds of people have sued the Albany diocese over sexual abuse they say they endured as children, sometimes decades ago. During the four-day deposition, Hubbard named several priests who had been accused of sexual abuse who were referred to treatment and later returned to ministry, without notification to the public. One, David Bentley, admitted to Hubbard that he had engaged in the behavior alleged.

3 sentenced to prison in slayings of Ohio man, teen girl

CLEVELAND, Ohio (AP)—Two men have been sentenced to life in prison and a third to a shorter term in the grisly deaths of an Ohio man and his teenage daughter more than three years ago. The bodies of 39-year-old Paul Bradley and 14-year-old Paris Bradley were found in October 2018 in a burning car in East Cleveland. Cuyahoga County prosecutors said three men had broken into family home, tied up and beat the man while demanding money, then kidnapped the pair for five hours, killing the girl and setting fire to the car. The county medical examiner said the girl died of a gunshot to the head and the man from a combination of blunt force trauma and smoke inhalation from the fire. Assistant Prosecutor Gregory Paul called the slayings the result of "a barbarism that I cannot explain." Common Pleas Court Judge Kelly Ann Gallagher on Thursday sentenced Ronald Newberry and Kodii Gibson, who were each convicted of aggravated murder and other charges in separate trials, to life terms, Cleveland.com reported.

Driver crashes into Oregon homeless camp, killing 4

SALEM, Ore. (AP)—A driver crashed their car into a homeless encampment in Salem, Oregon, early Sunday morning, killing four people and injuring three more, including the driver, authorities said. Police arrested Enrique Rodriguez Jr., 24, on Sunday evening. Rodriguez was charged with four counts of first-degree manslaughter, second and third-degree assault and six counts of reckless endangerment. In a statement, authorities said the Salem Police Traffic Team believes "alcohol may have been a contributing factor" in the crash. It wasn't immediately clear whether Rodriguez had retained an attorney. Nathan Rose tells the Salem Statesman Journal that he and his girlfriend were in their tent when they heard two loud thuds. The car just missed their tent, Rose said. Rose said he saw some of his friends pinned under the car and called 911. He said he helped pull one person from under the car but witnesses were unable to help the others.

Asia

Shanghai starts China's biggest COVID-19 lockdown in 2 years

BEIJING (AP)—China began its most extensive lockdown in two years Monday to conduct mass testing and control a growing outbreak in Shanghai as questions are raised about the economic toll of the nation's "zero-COVID" strategy.

China's financial capital and largest city with 26 million people, Shanghai had managed its smaller, past outbreaks with limited lockdowns of housing compounds and workplaces where the virus was spreading. But the citywide lockdown that will conducted in two phases will be China's most extensive since the central city of Wuhan, where the virus was first detected in late 2019, confined its 11 million people to their homes for 76 days in early 2020.

Shanghai's Pudong financial district and nearby areas will be locked down from Monday to Friday as mass testing gets underway, the local government said. In the second phase of the lockdown, the vast downtown area west of the Huangpu River that divides the city will start its own five-day lockdown Friday.

Residents will be required to stay home and deliveries will be left at checkpoints to ensure there is no contact with the outside world. Offices and all businesses not considered essential will be closed and public transport suspended.

Already, many communities within Shanghai have been locked down for the past week, with their housing compounds blocked off with blue and yellow plastic barriers and residents required to submit to multiple tests for COVID-19. Shanghai's Disneyland theme park is among the businesses that closed earlier. Automaker Tesla is also suspending production at its Shanghai plant, according to media reports.

Panic-buying was reported on Sunday, with supermarket shelves cleared of food, beverages and household items. Additional barriers were being erected in neighborhoods Monday, with workers in hazmat suits staffing checkpoints.

Shanghai detected another 3,500 cases of infection on Sunday, though all but 50 were people who tested positive for the coronavirus but were not showing symptoms of COVID-19. While people who are asymptomatic can still infect others, China categorizes such cases separately from "confirmed cases"— those in people who are sick—leading to much lower totals in daily reports.

'Chinese maneuvers endangered PH ships'

AP

In this photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard, a Chinese Coast Guard ship sails near a Philippine Coast Guard vessel during its patrol at Bajo de Masinloc, 124 nautical miles west of Zambales province northwestern Philippines on March 2, 2022.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Chinese coast guard ships maneuvered dangerously close to Philippine coast guard ships at least four times near a disputed shoal over the past year, in moves that increased the risk of collision and violated international safety regulations, the Philippine government said Sunday.

It was not immediately clear if the Philippines has formally protested the aggressive actions by the Chinese ships, but Manila's coast guard said the incidents would not deter it from deploying patrol vessels at Scarborough Shoal and in other areas within the country's internationally recognized exclusive economic zone.

China seized Scarborough Shoal, a rich fishing area about 200 kilometers (120 miles) off the northwestern coast of the Philippines and 600 kilometers (370 miles) southeast of China, after a tense naval standoff in 2012. Chinese coast guards ships then surrounded the shoal and restricted Filipino fishermen's access.

The U.S. has accused China of bullying smaller South China Sea claimants like the Philippines and has deployed Navy ships and aircraft to promote freedom of navigation and overflight in the region. China, which claims the South China Sea virtually in totality, has warned Washington to stay away and accused it of meddling in what it says is a purely Asian dispute.

The incidents were reported to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila and an interagency body on the South China Sea "to address this issue through rules-based and peaceful approaches," Philippine coast guard chief Adm. Artemio Abu said in a statement.

Earlier this month, a Chinese coast guard ship maneuvered just 21 yards (63 feet) from a Philippine patrol vessel and restricted its maneuvering space in the vicinity of Scarborough Shoal, the Philippine coast guard said, adding that the Chinese action was "a clear violation" of a 1972 international safety regulation that aims to prevent sea collisions.

World

Ukraine pleads for help, says Russia wants to divide nation

LVIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused the West of cowardice Sunday while another top official said Russia was trying to split the nation in two, like North and South Korea.

Zelenskyy made an exasperated plea for fighter jets and tanks to help defend his country from Russia's invading troops. Russia now says its main focus is on taking control of the eastern Donbas region, an apparent pullback from its earlier, more expansive goals, but one which is raising fears of a divided Ukraine.

Speaking after U.S. President Joe Biden said in a lacerating speech that Russian President Vladimir Putin could not stay in power—words the White House immediately sought to downplay—Zelenskyy lashed out at the West's "ping-pong about who and how should hand over jets" and other weapons while Russian missile attacks kill and trap civilians.

"I've talked to the defenders of Mariupol today. I'm in constant contact with them. Their determination, heroism and firmness are astonishing," Zelenskyy said in a video address, referring to the besieged southern city that has suffered some of the war's greatest deprivations and horrors. "If only those who have been thinking for 31 days on how to hand over dozens of jets and tanks had 1% of their courage."

Zelenskyy also told independent Russian journalists Sunday that his government would consider declaring neutrality and offering security guarantees to Russia, repeating earlier statements. That would include keeping Ukraine nuclear-free, he said.

He told the reporters that the issue of neutrality – and agreeing to stay out of NATO – should be put to Ukrainian voters in a referendum after Russian troops withdraw. He said a vote could take place within a few months of the troops leaving.

Russia quickly banned the interview from being published. Roskomnadzor, which regulates communications for Moscow, issued the ban, saying there could be action taken against the Russian media outlets that took part, which included "those that are foreign media outlets acting as foreign agents."

Russia-based outlets appeared to comply with the ban although the interview was published abroad.

El Salvador declares state of emergency

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—El Salvador's congress granted President Nayib Bukele's request to declare a state of emergency early Sunday amid a wave of gang-related killings over the weekend.

Fourteen people were killed Friday and 62 people died Saturday, a scale of violence that has not been seen for years. By comparison, there were 79 homicides in the entire month of February.

Bukele announced the request Saturday in his social media accounts, and congress approved it early Sunday. The decree would suspend constitutional guarantees of freedom of assembly and loosen arrest rules for as much as thirty days, but could be extended.

The homicides appeared linked to the country's notorious street gangs, who effectively control many neighborhoods in the capital. The National Police reported they have captured five leaders of the Mara Salvatrucha or MS-13, who they claimed ordered the weekend killings.

Bukele wrote in his social media accounts that he was ordering the head of the country's prisons to carry out an immediate 24/7 lockdown of gang inmates in their cells.

"They are not to go out even to the patio" of prisons, Bukele wrote, adding "a message to the gangs: because of your actions, now your homeboys will not see even one ray of sunlight."

While Bukele has tried to project a tough attitude on crime, the country's enormously powerful street gangs have proved a double-edged sword for him.

"We must remind the people of El Salvador that what is happening now is due to the negligence of those who protected criminals," the conservative Arena party said in a statement.

Gunmen kill 2 in Israel attack—Israeli police

JERUSALEM (AP)—A pair of Arab gunmen killed two people and wounded four others Sunday in a shooting spree in central Israel before they were killed by police, according to police and medical officials.

It was the second deadly nationalist attack carried out by Arab assailants in an Israeli city in less than a week. On Tuesday, a lone attacker inspired by the Islamic State group killed four people in a stabbing rampage in southern Israel before he was killed by passersby.

Israeli security officials said the gunmen were supporters of the Islamic State extremist group who were Arab citizens from northern Israel. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation was continuing.

The attack comes just ahead of the volatile period of Ramadan and also threatened to cast a shadow over a gathering of foreign ministers in the Negev desert, where the Iranian nuclear deal was expected to top the agenda. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett rushed to the scene.

Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister Yair Lapid briefed his counterparts from the U.S. and four Arab countries, who condemned the attack. Lapid issued a statement calling it "heinous" and "an attempt by violent extremists to terrorize and to damage the fabric of life here."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But Hamas, the Islamic militant group that rules Gaza, praised the attack as a "heroic operation."

Security camera footage circulating on Israeli media showed two bearded men appearing to open fire in the city of Hadera before they are shot. An Israeli official said two members of the Israeli Border Police counterterrorism unit were in a restaurant near the attack, ran out and killed the assailants.

Overdrive

Ridin' 'round town in Ford's frisky new Maverick foal

By HENRY PAYNE
THE DETROIT NEWS

A housing contractor visited my house and immediately noted the 2022 Ford Maverick tester in the driveway. Area 51 Blue paint. Base model. Steely wheels.

"Wow. Is that the new little Ford pickup?!!"

My friend Scott loves Ford pickups. He'll probably be buried in his F-150. He hopped in the Maverick and a smile grew across his face.

"I could use this around town. Save my F-150 for trips to the farm."

He'll have time to think about it—the Maverick is sold out until summer. Our 2021 Detroit News Vehicle of the Year, the compact pickup has been red-hot. When it was announced this summer, it attracted 100,000 reservations. It sold 4,140 units out of the gate in October. Fully 25% of buyers were millennials—twice the industry average for car models—the coveted entry-level demographic.

Which is encouraging since the Maverick is now Ford's entry-level vehicle, taking over the spot the ubiquitous Focus and Fiesta used to fill—even as its current average monthly sales are below the Ecosport, Ford's outgoing entry-level SUV. I spent a week with the Maverick this winter to dig deeper into what makes this compact so appealing, and to circle its shortcomings.

At $21K, the Maverick is still pricey for an entry-level car compared to the $17K Fiestas of yore, but it appears Ford has concluded that sub-$20,000 vehicles are money-losers in today's highly regulated environment. Better to make margin on small SUVs (and pickups) and leave first-time buyers to the used market where they can find affordable pre-owned vehicles—then buy into factory warranties.

Maverick was easy on the eyes with each new day. The Area 51 Blue is attractive, as is the car's trim (even the steel wheels, which have a retro charm). My pickup pals Scott and Jim were less impressed—they just saw cheap steelies.

They would likely jump to the XLT package for another $2,300—gaining attractive 17-inch aluminum black wheels as well as cruise control, then adding blind-spot assist for another $540.

After which there is a $10,000 price gulf to, ahem, a Bronco Sport-like $34K to achieve the features Mrs. Payne finds essential in Michigan's four seasons: all-wheel-drive, adaptive cruise control, heated seats. Such features only come with an upgrade to the more powerful 250-horse turbo-4 engine.

But if the base hybrid's 42 mpg (50 mpg city!) and 580-mile range is what flips your switch, then the front-wheel-drive version it must be.

After an inch of snow, my base truck craaaaaaawled out of the driveway—automatic traction control is obsessive about controlling slip in front-wheel-drive configuration. Enough of that. I switched the nannies off and charged ahead, the FWD system doing its work with the engine weight over top of it (a base rear-wheel drive F-150, on the other hand, can be a little hairy with the unladen wheels in back).

When the roads are clear, Maverick is fun to ride. This is a tiny truck like the "good ol' days" of wee Rangers (121-inch wheelbase vs. the 1990 Ranger's 124 inches, though Maverick is 6 inches longer). But sitting on the same unibody chassis as the smooth-driving Escape (and Bronco Sport), it is on another plane in handling. You can really hustle Maverick through the corners.

That unibody also pays dividends inside with better interior headroom, front shoulder room and rear legroom than its bigger-boned 2021 Ranger mid-size sibling. The interior puts the Ranger to shame with its modern tablet screen, molded plastic and sculpted door interiors that perfectly fit an upright Thermos (no rattling). My friend Jim marveled at the clever "winged" door arm rests.

The Maverick has made headlines with its DIY ethic (the bed features a QR code that links to a web page showing owners how to hack the wiring system, and you can hang your own 3D-printed device off its rear center console hook) and, sure enough, my truck buddies are Do-It-Yourselfers. They hope Ford follows through on littering its website with more DIY videos as the Maverick owner club grows.

Though lacking standard cruise control, the Maverick is equipped with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity, giving it excellent navigation capability. Buy a $100 Carlinkit adapter online and your phone will connect wirelessly, like in luxury vehicles costing thousands of dollars more.

With 1,500 pounds of payload capability and easy seating for four, the Maverick is everything you need for an urban pickup. Honey, I shrunk the F-150.

NUTS & BOLTS

- Vehicle type: Front engine, front- and all-wheel-drive, five-passenger compact pickup
- Price: $21,490, including $1,495 destination fee ($21,490 FWD XL Hybrid as tested)
- Powerplant: Hybrid 2.5-liter 4-cylinder mated to electric motor; 2.0-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder
- Power: 191 horsepower, 155 pound-feet torque (hybrid)
- Transmission: Continuously variable
- Performance: 0-60 mph, NA; towing capacity, 2,000 pounds (hybrid)
- Weight: 3,674 pounds
- Fuel economy: EPA est. 42 mpg city/33 highway/37 combined (hybrid as tested)

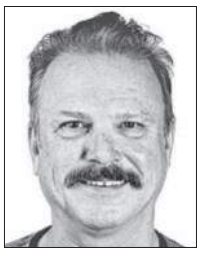
Report card

- Highs: Hybrid price is right; nifty interior
- Lows: Desirable truck features like AWD and adaptive cruise will cost ya; wireless Apple CarPlay, please
- Overall: 4 stars

ORD/TNS
The 2022 Ford Maverick Hybrid XLT.

MOTORMOUTH: Device to improve mpg?

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: I've seen online a so-called EcoChip, which is supposed to reduce fuel consumption by up to 55%. Is this legit? Does it work? It plugs into the car's onboard diagnostic system. Will using it void my OEM or my extended warranty? Thanks, your thoughts would be greatly appreciated!

A: When fuel prices spike, people go looking for something — anything — to boost their miles per gallon. I am skeptical of miracle devices and have seen a lot of useless stuff over the years. One early contraption was a pair of magnets taped onto the fuel line to "align the ions in the gasoline." Farmers know them as cow magnets. Various devices claimed to swirl the incoming fresh air to improve complete combustion. And so on. ... I am open to independent scientific data to support contraption claims. Until then, I will work on improving my driving habits.

Q: You say not to disconnect the battery and remove the power from any system or device modularly controlled, like power windows, because it may no longer function when power is restored. How do you replace a battery?

A: Although some people call it a battery saver, it is really a computer memory saver. This is a small device that plugs into the OBD-II (On-Board Diagnostics generation two) connector found under the dash. It's the same port through which professional technicians connect their diagnostic scan equipment. Inexpensive memory savers go for around $20. For power, it can be plugged into a battery bank via a cigarette lighter (nee power port) connector. You can also find memory savers having clamps that you connect to another car battery — just not your own.

Q: So how many readers have written to you so far advising that you apologize to the wrong singer in today's column? Manfred Mann didn't write "Blinded by the Light." He and his Earth Band merely covered the early Bruce Springsteen tune (weakly in my humble opinion), as they did with Springsteen's "For You" and "Spirit in the Night." It might be prudent to confess to the error in your next column and apologize to Springsteen instead. You could hang the mistake on "we really are getting older." Thanks for the good work though.

A: Mea culpa. My apologies to The Boss. Too bad, Mann.

Q: Your response to "P.G." from Virginia Beach, Virginia, about the 2006 Trailblazer not starting after being driven was spot-on. Years ago, we had a Chevy station wagon that had the same problem. I followed my father's advice and always carried a small hammer with us to tap the starter when it would fail (usually after driving a few hundred miles pulling our pop-up camper). Dad was a chassis engineer for GM for 45 years or so. His first advice was to replace the starter, but at the time we couldn't afford it. When we scraped up money for a new starter, I discovered that the heat shield designed to protect the starter from engine heat was missing. The combination of a new starter and installing the heat shield fixed the problem and I no longer had to bang on the starter to get the car running!

A: Thanks. There's nothing quite as satisfying as knowing when you get something right. It removes some of the heat.

Life & Style

At a pugnacious Oscars, Apple's feel-good 'CODA' triumphs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—After a movie year often light on crowds, the Academy Awards named an unabashed crowd-pleaser, the deaf family drama "CODA," best picture Sunday, handing Hollywood's top award to a streaming service for the first time in a ceremony that saw the greatest drama when Will Smith strode onstage and slapped Chris Rock.

Sian Heder's "CODA," which first premiered at a virtual Sundance Film Festival in winter 2021, started out as an underdog but gradually emerged as the Oscars' feel-good favorite. It also had one very deep-pocketed backer in Apple TV+, which scored its first best picture Academy Award on Sunday, less than three years after launching the service.

It also handed another near-miss defeat to Netflix, the veteran streamer that for years has tried vainly to score best picture. Its best chance, Jane Campion's "The Power of the Dog," came in with a leading 12 nominations. It won one, for Campion's direction.

But "CODA" rode a wave of goodwill driven by its cast including Marlee Matlin, Troy Kotsur, Emilia Jones and Daniel Durant. It's the first film with a largely deaf cast to win best picture. "CODA" managed that despite being one of the least-nominated films with only three coming into Sunday. Not since 1932's "Grand Hotel" has a movie won best picture with fewer than four nods.

Kotsur also won best supporting actor to become the first male deaf actor to win an Oscar, and only the second deaf actor to do so, joining his castmate and "CODA" co-star Matlin.

AP

Will Smith, right, hits presenter Chris Rock on stage while presenting the award for best documentary feature at the Oscars on Sunday, March 27, 2022, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

"This is for the Deaf community, the CODA community and the disabled community," said Kotsur, signing from the stage. "This is our moment."

Many, though, were talking about another moment. After Rock, as a presenter, joked to Jada Pinkett Smith that he was looking forward to a sequel to "G.I. Jane," Will Smith stood up from his seat near the stage, strode up to Rock and smacked him. After sitting back down, Smith shouted at Rock to "keep my wife's name out of your (expletive) mouth." When Rock, who joked about Jada Pinkett Smith while hosting the Oscars in 2016, protested that it was just a "GI Jane" joke, Smith repeated the same line.

"That was the greatest night in the history of television," Rock said, before awkwardly returning to presenting best documentary, which went to Questlove's "Summer of Soul (...or When the Revolution Was Not Televised)."

The moment shocked the Dolby Theatre audience and viewers at home. At the commercial break, presenter Daniel Kaluuya came up to hug Smith, and Denzel Washington escorted him to the side of the stage. The two talked and hugged and Tyler Perry came over to talk as well.

Smith, who plays Venus and Serena Williams' father in "King Richard," later in the show won best actor, his first Oscar. It meant Smith again took the stage shortly after what seemed likely to be one of the most infamous moments in Academy Awards history. His acceptance speech vacillated between defense and apology.

"Richard Williams was a fierce defender of his family," Smith said in his first remarks. He continued: "I'm being called on in my life to love people and to protect people and to be a river to my people."

Smith then shared what Washington told him: "At your highest moment, be careful because that's when the devil comes for you."

Ultimately, Smith apologized to the academy and to his fellow nominees.

"Art imitates life. I look like the crazy father" said Smith, chuckling. "But love will make you do crazy things."

Up until then, the show—fashioned as a revival for the Oscars and the movies—had been running fairly smoothly. Ariana DeBose became the first Afro-Latina and openly LBGTQ actor to win an Academy Award for supporting actress. Jane Campion won the Oscar best director for "The Power of the Dog," her open-plains psychodrama that twisted and upended western conventions.

Campion, who had been the first woman ever twice nominated in the category (previously for 1993's "The Piano"), is only the third woman to win best director. It's also the first time the directing award has ever gone to women in back-to-back years, after "Nomadland" filmmaker Chloé Zhao won last year.

Best actress went to Jessica Chastain, who also won her first Oscar. Chastain won for her empathetic portrayal of the televangelist Tammy Faye in "The Eyes of Tammy Faye," a movie she also produced.

After record-low ratings and a pandemic-marred 2021 show, producers this year turned to one of the biggest stars around—Beyoncé—to kick off an Oscars intended to revive the awards' place in pop culture. After an introduction from Venus and Serena Williams, Beyoncé performed her «King Richard» nominated song, «Be Alive,» in an elaborately choreographed performance from a lime-colored, open-air stage in Compton, where the Williams sisters grew up.

Hosts Wanda Sykes, Amy Schumer and Regina Hall then began the telecast from the Dolby Theatre.

Sykes, Schumer and Hall breezily joked through prominent Hollywood issues like pay equity—they said three female hosts were "cheaper than one man"—the Lady Gaga drama that Sykes called "House of Random Accents," the state of the Golden Globes (now relegated to the memoriam package, said Sykes) and Leonardo DiCaprio's girlfriends. Their most pointed political point came at the end of their routine, in which they promised a great night and then alluded to Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill.

OSCAR WINNERS

Winners at the Academy Awards on Sunday:

- Best picture: "CODA"
- Best actor: Will Smith, "King Richard"
- Best actress: Jessica Chastain, "The Eyes of Tammy Faye"
- Documentary feature: "Summer of Soul (Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)"
- Original song: "No Time to Die" from "No Time to Die," music and lyric by Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell
- Best director: Jane Campion, "The Power of the Dog"
- Best supporting actor: Troy Kotsur, "CODA"
- Best international film: "Drive My Car," Japan
- Costume design: "Cruella"
- Original screenplay: "Belfast"
- Adapted screenplay: "CODA"
- Best supporting actress: Ariana DeBose
- Cinematography: "Dune"
- Visual Effects: "Dune"
- Best animated feature: "Encanto"
- Sound: "Dune"
- Documentary (short subject): "The Queen of Basketball"
- Best animated short film: "The Windshield Wiper"
- Live action short: "The Long Goodbye"
- Music (original score): "Dune"
- Film editing: "Dune"
- Production design: "Dune"
- Makeup and hairstyling: "The Eyes of Tammy Faye"

For more on this year's Oscars, visit: https://apnews.com/hub/academy-awards ***(AP)***

Good deed for daughter turns into a disaster

DEAR ABBY: I have a daughter who married a less-than-capable provider because she was pregnant. She's sloppy, hasn't seen a dentist in five years, barely keeps her room clean and is very overweight. She lives with us now because she decided, finally, to go back to school.

We let her live in an apartment we own, and it became so full of roaches—because they didn't clean their dishes or floors -- that we left it "as-is." We are afraid to buy anything for them to live in again, because they have no regard for their things, their child's things or any place they live. What should we do when she finally gets a job, if that happens? Do we move her someplace and let her mess it up? Must we take care of everything?

RAISING A CHILD-ADULT

DEAR RAISING: It's a hopeful sign that your daughter has finally decided to return to school. However, from your description, she may be severely depressed and need to be seen by a doctor. That she would raise a baby in a filthy roach-infested dwelling has me concerned about her ability to function as a parent.

Be a little more patient with your daughter and encourage her to follow through with her schooling. If the apartment still belongs to you, have it professionally cleaned and permit her to stay in it AS LONG AS IT IS KEPT CLEAN ENOUGH THAT THE BABY CAN SAFELY LIVE THERE.

Once she graduates and finds employment, give her enough money for a down payment or a deposit on an apartment. Look after your grandchild while she's working if her husband is incapable of doing it, which likely will be the case. Most important, make sure your grandchild is properly cared for.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: When I was in high school, I stopped going by my short nickname and began going by my more formal given name. Everyone has been respectful, except my significant other. When he met me 20 years ago, the change had already occurred. Yet he continues to call me by the nickname. He does it whenever he talks about me to others, and it often leads to my being in a social situation and having to correct people.

When I have tried to impress upon him how important this is to me, he says I am being "trivial." Abby, it is my NAME, and I think I have the right to be called what I want. I consider his refusal to understand how I feel a sign of disrespect. Am I wrong?

CALL ME BY MY NAME

DEAR CALL: No, you are not wrong. Your significant other should have made more of an effort to call you by your preferred name 20 years ago. Had he done that, by now it would have become habit. Correct him every time he uses the wrong name, whether it's in private or in public.

For many people, this would not be a deal-breaker. However, because it is for you, it may be time to consider replacing him with someone who wants to help you be the person you want to be, rather than put a stumbling block in your way.

DEAR ABBY

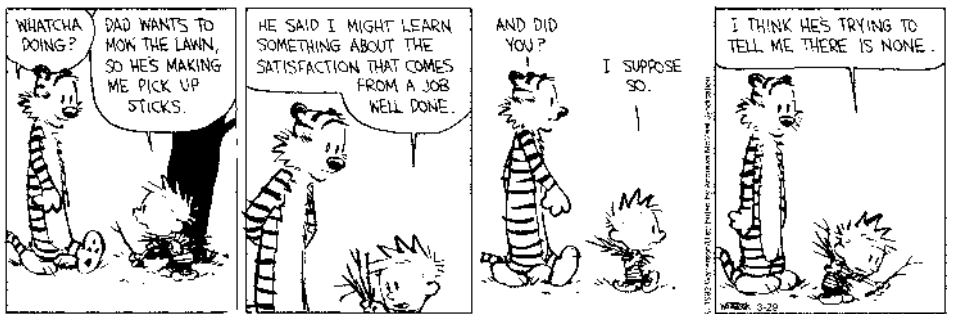
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHATCHA DOING?
DAD WANTS TO MOW THE LAWN, SO HE'S MAKING ME PICK UP STICKS.
HE SAID I MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT THE SATISFACTION THAT COMES FROM A JOB WELL DONE.
AND DID YOU?
I SUPPOSE SO.
I THINK HE'S TRYING TO TELL ME THERE IS NONE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

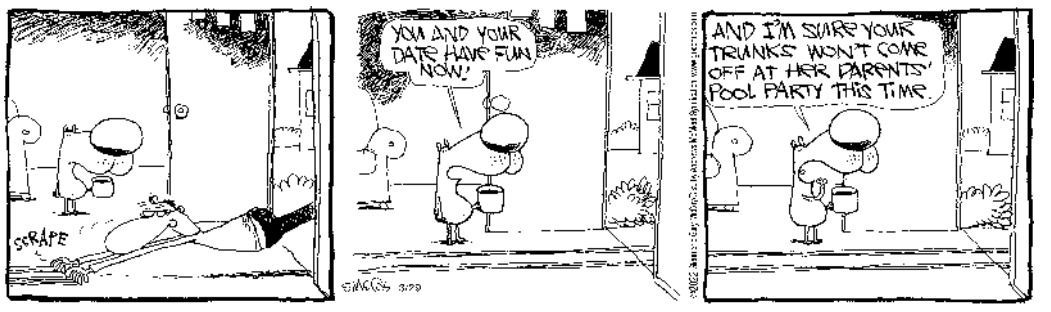
DONK!
OH, NO! A BIRD HIT THE PICTURE WINDOW!
POOR LITTLE FELLA
I'LL GO HAVE A LOOK AT HIM
DO WE HAVE AN EXTENSION CORD?
PUT THE BLENDER BACK
J.M. DAVIS 3-29

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Stagger
5 Envelope part
9 "Kapow!"
12 — Romeo
13 Timber wolf
14 "Strange Magic" gp.
15 Solve
17 Zodiac feline
18 Man-handles
19 Mirren of "The Queen"
21 Estate measures
24 Pool table surface
25 Coffin stand
26 Escape
30 Pool unit
31 Trifled (with)
32 Sardonic
33 Ump's shout
35 Put on
36 Karate level
37 Gibbs or Maples
38 Diacritical mark
40 Locks
42 Singer DiFranco
43 Relaxes
48 Govt. health org.
49 "I'm a klutz!"
50 Highly rated
51 Sounds of woe
52 Japanese soup
53 "Huh?'

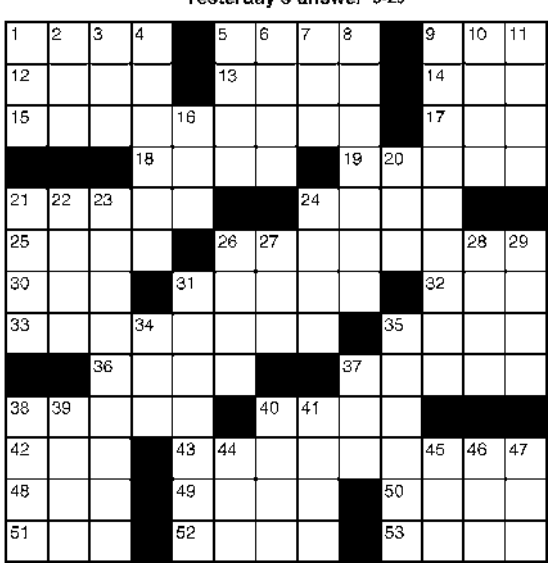
DOWN

1 U.K. military fliers
2 Yale grad
3 D followers
4 Singer Cyndi
5 Soared
6 Novelist Anita
7 — Dhabi
8 Person with high ideals?
9 Quasi-modo's work-place
10 Sheltered
11 Earth orbiter
16 Dorm VIPs
20 Wapiti
21 With skill
22 "Arrive-derci!"
23 Korea and Hon-duras, e.g.
24 Shoe fillers
26 Chimney buildup
27 Big Apple sch.
28 Russian river
29 Model Banks
31 Verizon, for one
34 Flushed
35 Capital of Poland
37 Wire measure
38 Fiesta food
39 Race place
40 Places for holsters
41 To boot
44 — polloi
45 La-la lead-in
46 Italian article
47 Asian holiday

Solution time: 22 mins.

D	A	R	I	■	E	S	C	■	I	A	B	S
E	I	T	H	E	R	C	R	■	I	T	C	O
F	R	E	E	R	I	D	E	■	V	A	N	S
■	■	■	B	I	O	■	V	O	C	D	C	O
R	E	N	E	E	■	S	A	U	L	■	■	■
A	L	A	S	■	B	U	S	R	I	D	E	■
P	E	N	■	C	R	E	S	S	■	R	T	S
■	C	A	B	R	I	D	E	■	T	U	N	A
■	■	■	L	A	N	E	■	B	E	G	A	N
M	O	H	A	W	K	■	A	L	T	■	■	■
A	T	O	Z	■	L	I	M	O	R	I	D	E
R	O	M	E	■	E	M	O	T	I	C	O	N
S	E	E	R	■	Y	A	K	■	S	U	M	O

Yesterday's answer 3-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Megan Hilty, 41; Lucy Lawless, 54; Amy Sedaris, 61; Eric Idle, 79.

Happy Birthday: Take the high road. Pursue your goals with strength, courage and intelligence. How you handle others and the team you put together will pay off. Aim for personal and financial stability, and put your mind at rest, knowing you have done the best you can. Physical and emotional improvements are favored. Your numbers are 4, 12, 22, 24, 33, 38, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take stock of what you've done and what's left to do. An energetic approach and reaching out to those who complement your skills and share your mindset will encourage success. Maintain a healthy fitness routine. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Control your emotions when working alongside others. Making a change without consulting others will cause havoc. Use your power of persuasion to get others to do things your way. Protect against injury or insult by following proper protocol. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Stick to instructions when you barrel ahead with passion and conviction. Be wise to anyone who tries to lure you down a slippery slope. Temptation is the enemy, and intelligence and practicality are the ways to success. Romance and dedication will lead to happiness. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Keep your thoughts to yourself, and do your own thing. Diversity will show your depth and keep others wondering what you'll do next. A modern approach will capture the moment and put you in the spotlight. It's what you do that counts. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* A change based on emotions will turn out to be costly. Think matters through before you act. Run your ideas by someone you love and trust, and together you'll come up with a plan that will help you get what you want. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Get into the groove and make your move. You have plenty going for you, so don't let anyone stand in your way. Be a leader, look at the big picture and decide how long it will take to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Participate in events that give you the platform you need to show everyone who you are and what you have to offer. Share your thoughts and intentions with someone who can complement your plans. Look for equality in partnerships. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Refuse to let anyone goad you into an argument. Gravitate toward people who encourage you to use your skills uniquely and live life your way. Make happiness your long-term goal, and you'll find a way to make a difference. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Listen carefully, but don't get into a debate with someone looking for a fight. Focus on professional gains and taking care of your responsibilities at home. Don't feel obligated to take on someone's problems. Discipline and self-improvement are encouraged. ✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Play your cards close to your chest. Work behind the scenes putting together a foolproof plan that will tip the scale in your favor. Precision and detail, along with timing, will ensure that you gain momentum and reach the success you desire. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Set your sights on accomplishment. Wasting time on something that doesn't fit your lifestyle, budget or skill set will leave you in a vulnerable position. Don't be a follower; you will gain the most if you do what you do best. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Pay attention, and let your imagination churn out unique ways to improve your life. You are overdue for a change that will make you feel content and give you peace of mind. Follow a path that brings you joy. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are energetic, forceful and helpful. You are demonstrative and engaging.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				1		8	9
	5		6				7
6		9		2			
	2		1		4		6
1						3	
8	9		3		7		
		4		8		9	
2			7		5		
1	3		6				

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	7	9	3	8	6	1	4	5
4	8	6	9	1	5	3	2	7
1	3	5	4	7	2	6	8	9
5	1	8	2	9	3	4	7	6
9	6	2	8	4	7	5	1	3
7	4	3	5	6	1	2	9	8
6	9	1	7	5	4	8	3	2
8	2	4	6	3	9	7	5	1
3	5	7	1	2	8	9	6	4

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ADD A LITTLE GARNISH — Solution: 7 letters

J	M	B	A	L	U	D	N	E	L	A	C	G	S	E
C	U	A	A	C	H	I	V	E	S	E	M	I	L	L
M	R	L	R	S	C	L	C	O	C	O	A	N	I	K
U	E	O	I	I	I	L	C	R	E	A	M	G	C	N
I	T	A	Q	E	G	L	E	M	O	N	R	E	E	I
T	A	C	T	U	N	O	C	O	C	U	T	R	S	R
R	L	K	A	L	E	N	L	R	E	T	T	A	L	P
U	O	F	R	R	R	T	E	D	E	T	N	O	S	S
T	C	F	L	S	A	O	T	H	S	S	A	I	N	T
S	O	R	A	A	I	M	C	E	N	P	L	L	M	S
A	H	U	D	B	V	N	E	E	S	U	R	T	P	I
N	C	I	L	S	A	O	E	L	O	S	T	I	B	W
E	S	T	E	M	C	R	R	C	A	N	D	Y	G	T
H	O	R	A	N	G	E	A	D	E	E	W	A	E	S
S	R	E	F	A	W	C	O	N	D	I	M	E	N	T

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Baran, Basil, Bits, Calendula, Candy, Caramel, Caviar, Chives, Chocolate, Cocoa, Coconut, Condiment, Coulis, Cream, Croquettes, Croutons, Dill, Dish, Flavor, Fruit, Ginger, Greens, Julienne, Kale, Leaf, Lemon, Lime, Manchette, Marigolds, Mint, Nasturtium, Orange, Plate, Platter, Sauce, Seaweed, Slices, Sprigs, Sprinkle, Twist, Wafers

Yesterday's Answer: Harvest

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 50, 51 and 53 through 66, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

North Carolina ousts Peacocks, sets up Final Four Duke clash

PHILADELPHIA (AP)— North Carolina crushed all hope of a March Madness miracle in the early going Sunday, getting 20 points and 22 rebounds from Armando Bacot in a wire-to-wire 69-49 runaway over 15th-seeded Saint Peter's.

The eighth-seeded Tar Heels (28-9) made their record 21st Final Four, and next on their list is none other than archrival Duke and its soon-to-be-retiring coach, Mike Krzyzewski.

Next Saturday in New Orleans will mark the first Final Four meeting — first NCAA Tournament meeting, in fact — between the Tobacco Road archrivals whose campuses are separated by 11 miles.

Two nights earlier, Saint Peter's (21-12) beat Purdue to become the first 15 seed to advance to an Elite Eight. But the underdog Peacocks are hardly the first team to see grand plans undone by one of the country's top-line power programs.

After Carolina's Leaky Black missed a free throw 2 1/2 minutes in, Bacot edged in for the offensive rebound and an easy putback. It gave Carolina a 7-0 lead. In its three tournament wins over Kentucky, Murray State and Purdue, Saint Peter's had never trailed by more than six.

Late in the first half, Daryl Banks III's attempted jam was rejected by the front of the rim. It made the Peacocks 5 for 27 on the night, and when Bacot dunked on the next possession, North Carolina led 36-15.

AP

North Carolina's Hubert Davis celebrates after North Carolina won a college basketball game against St. Peter's in the Elite 8 round of the NCAA tournament, Sunday, March 27, 2022, in Philadelphia.

Fousseyni Drame led Saint Peter's with 12 points and KC Ndefo had 10.

MIDWEST REGION
Kansas 76, Miami 50

In Chicago, Ochai Agbaji was all over the court. David McCormack dominated inside, and Christian Braun connected from deep.

With one dazzling finish, Kansas roared into the Final Four.

Agbaji, McCormack and Braun led the top-seeded Jayhawks to a brilliant second half in a 76-50 victory over Miami on Sunday, sending one of college basketball's top programs to the national semifinals for the 16th time.

"That was about as well as we can play, the second half," coach Bill Self said. "These guys earned it."

They sure did.

After trailing by six at halftime, Kansas outscored Miami 47-15. The Jayhawks shot 59.3% (16 for 27) after the break, compared to 21.4% (6 for 28) for the Hurricanes. They also outrebounded Miami 25-11 in the final 20 minutes.

Once the Jayhawks started flashing their superior speed and athleticism, the Hurricanes couldn't keep up.

"We started to play the score, not the game," Miami forward Sam Waardenburg said.

Agbaji scored 12 of his 18 points in the second half. McCormack opened the half with his own 5-0 run and finished with 15 points on 6-for-7 shooting. Braun made Kansas' first 3-pointer with 15:27 left to snap a 40-40 tie.

"We just needed some energy," said Braun, who finished with 12 points. "I thought we were flat in the first half."

Kansas (32-6), the only No. 1 seed left in the NCAA Tournament, won the Midwest Region for the 13th time with its ninth consecutive victory overall. Next up is a Final Four matchup with Villanova on Saturday in New Orleans.

Remy Martin, the region's most outstanding player, had nine points and six rebounds for the Jayhawks. Jalen Wilson grabbed 11 boards, making up for a tough shooting day.

It's the fourth Final Four for Self in his 19 seasons at Kansas. He also had one of the best teams in the country when the tourney was canceled in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The last time the Jayhawks made it to the semis, they lost 95-79 to coach Jay Wright and the Wildcats in 2018.

"I've thought all along that this was a possibility," Self said. "But I've also thought all along that the margin for error wasn't such where we could get loose and have it be a probability."

Kameron McGusty scored 18 points and Isaiah Wong had 15 for No. 10 seed Miami in the program's first appearance in the Elite Eight. The Hurricanes (26-11) were bidding to get coach Jim Larrañaga back to the Final Four for the first time since he led 11th-seeded George Mason on a memorable run in 2006.

"Just being able to accomplish what we accomplished this year, now teams coming in or new teams, two, three years down the line, that Elite Eight is going to be the goal," McGusty said. "That's what we were able to do this year, and I'm so happy for us. I love these guys."

Louisville, N.C. State, UConn, Michigan round out Elite 8

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP)—Paige Bueckers and Christyn Williams each scored 15 points to lead a balanced UConn offense in a 75-58 win over Indiana on Saturday to advance the Huskies into their 16th consecutive women's NCAA Tournament regional final.

Olivia Nelson-Ododa had a double-double with 10 points and 14 rebounds for Connecticut (28-5), which outscored the Hoosiers 46-32 in the paint.

Azzi Fudd added 13 points for the Huskies, who face top-seeded North Carolina State on Monday night in an attempt to earn a 14th straight trip to the Final Four.

Ali Patberg, in her seventh year of college basketball thanks to transfer and COVID-19 rules, had 16 points for the third-seeded Hoosiers, who finish their season at 24-9. Grace Berger had 13 points and Mackenzie Holmes added 12 for Indiana.

UConn led 37-33 at the half, but opened the second half with a 16-0 run to take control of the game.

BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL
N.C. State 66, Notre Dame 63

In Bridgeport, Conn, Raina Perez's steal at midcourt and layup with 14 seconds left lifted top-seeded N.C. State to a win over fifth-seed Notre Dame.

It's the Wolfpack's first trip to the Elite Eight since 1998, when they reached the Final Four.

Trailing 59-51 early in the fourth quarter, the Wolfpack (32-3) rallied, scoring 15 of the final 19 points capped by Perez's layup. The Irish had one last chance, but Maddy Westbeld missed a 3-pointer from the wing and Perez hit both free throws for the final margin.

Elissa Cunane scored 16 points and Kai Crutchfield added 14 for the Wolfpack, who hadn't lost since dropping one to the Irish on Feb. 1.

Olivia Miles scored 21 points and Westbeld added 13 for the Irish (24-9).

AP

Connecticut forward Olivia Nelson-Ododa (20) reaches for a rebound against Indiana forward Mackenzie Holmes (54) during the fourth quarter of a college basketball game in the Sweet Sixteen round of the NCAA women's tournament, Saturday, March 26, 2022, in Bridgeport, Conn.

WICHITA REGIONAL
Louisville 76, Tennessee 64

In Wichita, Kan., Hailey Van Lith had 23 points and six assists, Emily Engstler had 20 points and 10 rebounds, and No. 1 seed Louisville held off Tennessee to reach the Elite Eight for the fourth consecutive time.

Kianna Smith also had 12 points for the Cardinals (28-4), who blew most of an early 15-point lead before pulling away late in the fourth quarter to set up a date with No. 3 seed Michigan for a spot in the Final Four.

The Cardinals have become one of the nation's dominant women's programs under coach Jeff Walz — much like the Lady Vols were for so many years under Pat Summitt — but are still chasing their first national championship.

Rae Burrell led fourth-seeded Tennessee (25-9) with 22 points, but she didn't get a whole lot of help from her team, which had 18 turnovers. Jordan Walker contributed 10 points but had five of the turnovers.

Michigan 52, South Dakota 49

In Wichita, Kan., Naz Hillmon had 17 points and 10 rebounds and Laila Phelia scored the go-ahead layup in the final minute for No. 3 Michigan, which beat No. 10 seed South Dakota to reach the Elite Eight for the first time.

Phelia scored 14 points and Leigha Brown added 10 for the Wolverines (25-6).

South Dakota (29-6) was trying to become just the fifth double-digit seed to reach the Elite Eight, but fell short. Hannah Sjerven had 17 points and eight rebounds before fouling out, while Chloe Lamb, the Summit League Player of the Year who averaged 16 points per game, was held to just six points.

Booker, Paul help NBA-leading Suns roll past 76ers, 114-104

PHOENIX (AP)—Devin Booker scored 35 points, Chris Paul had 19 points and 14 assists and the NBA-leading Phoenix Suns won their eighth straight game, beating the Philadelphia 76ers 114-104 on Sunday.

It was an intriguing matchup between two teams with an eye on the NBA Finals. The Suns have wrapped up the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference and best record in the league, while the 76ers are fighting Milwaukee, Boston and Miami for the top spot in the East. The loss left the 76ers are tied with the Bucks, a half-game behind the Celtics and Heat.

Phoenix is 61-14, a victory shy of trying the franchise season victory record. The 76ers had their three-game winning streak snapped despite another big game from Joel Embiid, who had 37 points and 15 rebounds.

James Harden had a tough game, shooting 2 of 11 from the field. He had 14 points, nine assists and seven rebounds.

AP

Philadelphia 76ers guard Tyrese Maxey, right, drives against Phoenix Suns guard Chris Paul (3) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 27, 2022, in Phoenix.

Hornets 119, Nets 110

In New York, LaMelo Ball had 33 points, nine assists and seven rebounds and Charlotte beat Brooklyn to spoil Kyrie Irving's first home game of the season and tie the Nets for eighth place in the Eastern Conference.

Irving finished with 16 points and tied his season high with 11 assists but shot 6 for 22 from the field. He hadn't been able to play at home this season until Mayor Eric Adams last week exempted athletes and performers from the New York City's coronavirus vaccine mandate.

Miles Bridges scored 24 points and PJ Washington had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Hornets. They won for the seventh time in eight games.

Kevin Durant had 27 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for the Nets.

Wizards 123, Warriors 115

In Washington, Corey Kispert scored 16 of his career-high 25 points in the first half and Washington beat struggling Golden State. The Warriros have lost five of its last six, and the Warriors never led in this game. Golden State was without Stephen Curry (left foot sprain) for a fifth straight contest, and Andre Iguodala (low back injury) also was out.

Jordan Poole scored 26 for the Warriors. Klay Thompson had 25.

Pelicans 116, Lakers 108

In New Orleans, Brandon Ingram scored 26 in his return from a 10-game absence and New Orleans overcame a 23-point deficit to beat Los Angeles in a game with postseason implications for both clubs.

New Orleans moved a half-game ahead of Los Angeles for the ninth seed — and the first of two play-in spots — in the Western Conference.

New Orleans got an enormous boost from rookies Trey Murphy III and Herb Jones. Murphy, drafted 17th overall, scored all of his 21 points in the second half. Jones, a second-round draft choice, had 16 points and a career-high six steals.

LeBron James hit seven 3-pointers and finished with 39 points.

Celtics 134, Timberwolves 112

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 34 points, Jaylen Brown had 31 points and 10 rebounds and Boston beat Minnesota for its sixth straight victory.

The Celtics won for the 24th time in their last 28 games. Minnesota is 12-5 since the All-Star break, winning 10 of 11 before back-to-back losses to Phoenix and Dallas this week.

Anthony Edwards scored 24 for Minnesota. Karl-Anthony Towns added 19.

Mavericks 114, Jazz 100

In Dallas, Luka Doncic scored 32 points and Dallas beat Utah for the inside track to home-court advantage in what could be a first-round playoff matchup.

The Mavericks moved a game ahead of the Jazz for the fourth seed in the Western Conference and earned a split of the season series, with the home team winning all four games.

Rudy Gay scored 18 points for the Jazz. They lost their fourth in a row on a season-long, six-game trip that ends Tuesday night at the Los Angeles Clippers.

Knicks 104, Pistons 102

In Detroit, Alec Burks hit a 3-pointer for New York's final points and finished off Detroit with a last-second steal.

Trailing by two, the Pistons called a timeout to set up a final play with 6.6 seconds left. Killian Hayes inbounded the ball to Cade Cunningham, but Burks stripped the ball as he tried to drive.

R.J. Barrett led New York with 21 points, Julian Randle had 20 and Burks and Immanuel Quickly had 18 each. Marvin Bagley III led Detroit with 27 points, and Cunningham added 18.

Two-way star Ohtani chosen as Angels' opening day pitcher

PHOENIX (AP)—The full Shohei Ohtani experience will be on display when the Los Angeles Angels take the field on opening day.

The two-way star was picked to be the team's starting pitcher for the April 7 opener at Angel Stadium against the Houston Astros. He's also expected to be in the lineup as the designated hitter.

The reigning AL Most Valuable Player is coming off one of the most unique and productive seasons in the sport's history.

"I spoke to him, and he's very excited about it," Angels manager Joe Maddon told reporters on Friday. "Typically, he handles things with very limited emotion. Of course, he's happy about it. He's earned the right to do that. We're ready to rock and roll. It's exciting for everybody. It's the right thing to do, and I'm looking forward to a good result."

Ohtani was 9-2 on the mound last season with a 3.18 ERA, striking out 156 over 130 1/3 innings. He also hit 46 homers, 26 doubles, an AL-best eight triples and stole 26 bases.

Ohtani is also expected to be the beneficiary of an MLB rule change. With the DH adopted in both leagues, pitchers who start games in the batting order can remain in the game as a DH after leaving the mound. A DH can also enter the game to pitch.

AP

Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani, left, of Japan, gives autographs to fans prior to a spring training baseball game against the Chicago Cubs, Thursday, March 24, 2022, in Tempe, Ariz.

CONFORTO UNSIGNED

There aren't many potentially high-impact players remaining in free agency. One expception is outfielder Michael Conforto.

The 2017 NL All-Star played seven seasons for the Mets before hitting the market this winter. The 29-year-old turned down New York's one-year, $18.4 million qualifying offer which means any team who signs him has to give up at least one draft pick.

That's one big reason the market appears fairly cool for the outfielder, even though opening day is in less than two weeks. Another reason is Conforto struggled some last year, hitting just .232 with 14 homers.

Still, he walks a lot, is younger than 30 years old, has 132 career homers and helped lead the Mets to the 2015 World Series. Now that there's a universal DH, his so-so defense is less of a concern for National League teams.

MOLINA BACK ON THE FIELD

St. Louis Cardinals veteran Yadier Molina threw out a would-be basestealer on Friday in a game against the team's minor leaguers.

The nine-time Gold Glove catcher missed the first week of what will likely be his final spring training to deal with a personal matter.

"It's always fun to hear that ball whiz by your head and then watch a guy get thrown out," said Miles Mikolas, who was pitching at the time.

The 39-year-old Molina — a 10-time All-Star — went 0 for 4 in the game played on a back field, with two flyouts and two groundouts.

Molina is targeting Sunday's game at the New York Mets for his Grapefruit League debut, manager Oliver Marmol said.

SOME LIKE IT HOT

It felt more like summer training instead of spring training in Arizona, where the temperature topped out at 96 degrees. That was a record for the city and about 15 degrees above normal for this time of the year.

Saipan Marathon 2022 registration closes on April 1

The last day to registration for Saipan Marathon 2022 half-marathon, 10K, and 5K is Friday, April 1, at 11:59pm. The event, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority in partnership with Northern Marianas Athletics, is slated for Saturday, April 9, 2022, in The Marianas.

To date, 94 individuals have registered for the race. Registration is open at www.raceroster.com and fees are $55 for all three courses for both international and resident participants. Special rates for CNMI students only with valid student identification are $40 for the 10K and 5K.

All participants will receive a finisher's T-shirt, a certificate of completion via email, and entry to the awards banquet at 5pm on race day at Aqua Resort Club.

JOSEPH CHIN

Some participants of the 2019 Saipan Marathon cross the finish line along Micro Beach Road in front of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"With the strong support of Northern Marianas Athletics, we are looking forward to another seamless and fun race this year," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We encourage everyone planning to join to make sure they don't miss Friday's deadline, as no late registration will be accepted. Join us, and let's up Saipan Marathon back on the racing map!"

The event is sponsored by Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands. In-kind contributors are Century Hotel, Serenity Hotel, and Aqua Resort Club Saipan. Aid stations will be provided by Saipan World Resort, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Triathlon Association of the CNMI, IT&E, Aqua Resort Club Saipan, Kensington Hotel Saipan, Coral Ocean Resort, and Pacific Islands Club Saipan. Supporters are Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Public Works, American Memorial Park, Division of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, Div. of Parks & Recreation, and Marianas Health Services.

The race follows some of Saipan's most scenic roadways, starting and ending at Micro Beach and American Memorial Park and providing stunning views of the azure blue lagoon along the Beach Road. Race packet pick-up will be available on April 8, 2022, from 5pm to 6:30pm at the American Memorial Park amphitheater. Start time on April 9 is 5:45am for the half-marathon, 6am for the 10K, and 6:10am for the 5K.

Awards will be presented to the Top 3 overall male and Female finishers for the Half Marathon, 10K and 5K. In addition, only the first place male and female finishers in their respective age division category will receive an award. There will be no age divisions for the 5K Run.

The race is a World Athletics™-AIMS Certified Course, as World Athletics™ has agreed to extend the measurement certificates for another 12 months for the Saipan Half Marathon and 10K.

For more information, visit The Marianas Calendar at www.mymarianas.com or contact MVA Community Projects coordinator Ed Diaz at 1.670.664.3210 or ediaz@mymarianas.com. ***(PR)***

WOO

From Page 20

Abel, 6-2, 6-0, to advance to the quarterfinals. Woo started the tournament with a 6-0, 6-1 victory over Andy Kim.

In the women's open singles, Elliot was again paired against close friend Serin Chung and won, 6-4, 2-6, 10-7.

She found herself down in the finals early so she had to catch up by playing more aggressively.

"I just knew I had to fight for the points as I was behind in the beginning. We were both tired but we tried our best to put our best efforts into the game," she said.

Elliot and Chung have bigger fish to dry than the singles championship of the Bridge Capital Tennis Classic, as the two teenagers are set to try out for the CNMI National Tennis Team for this year's Pacific Mini Games Northern Marianas 2022.

"We are currently preparing for the Mini Games tryouts. I am excited that I have the opportunity to be able to tryouts for the Mini Games. I have been training by going to the Mini Games practices every Saturday set up by coach Jeff [Race]," said Elliot.

Elliot advanced to the finals after beating Chung's younger sister, Irin, 6-2, 6-3, while Serin defeated Hoo Wang, 6-2, 6-2, to enter the finals.

A few hours after facing off in the super tiebreaker finals of the women's open singles, Elliot and Chung joined hands and played Mikayla Lopez and Tammy Ackerman in the women's doubles finals. Experience won out against youth and they lost in another super tiebreaker. Elliot, however, took the loss in stride.

"I think Serin and I just needed to be more aggressive in attacking the balls in the game. But I think overall we played pretty well," she said.

In the men's doubles, top seeds Woo and Sam Ryu took the championship after surviving Ramsey and Bobby Cruz, 6-4, 6-4.

Ed Javier and Ronnie Lacbayo justified their top ranking by going undefeated in the men's doubles 40 round-robin play. The duo won over Martin Jambor and Tomas Abel, 6-2, 7-6 (2), and Jorge Olanda and Jorge Poquiz, 6-4, 6-0, to win the division.

Javier and Lacbayo also ruled the men's doubles 4.0 after blanking the Kadokura brothers, Yukataka and Wataru, in straight sets, 6-0, 6-0.

In the men's singles 3.0, top seed Yutaka Kadokura got the better of second seed Kiwon Lee in the finals, 3-6, 6-1, 10-3. No. 2 seed Paul Jang, meanwhile, upset No. 1 seed Cody Shimizu, 6-1, 6-2, in the finals to win the men's singles 4.0.

The Bridge Capital Tennis Classic is organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association and will enter its juniors phase next weekend.

BLUE

From Page 20

paced a gallant stand by Magalahi Eagles with 29 and 22 markers, respectively. Blue Haus improved to 6-0, while Magalahi Eagles remain winless in five games.

In the second game, Buboy Sampang made just enough free throws and Ting Alegre completed a game-saving steal in the dying seconds that allowed Eagle Construction to survive their heated matchup against Marianas Dental Center, 97-95.

Eagle Construction breezed through the first half, but struggled when MDC employed a full-court press in the second. Rodney Catalla and Gerry Tolentino also waxed hot from 3-point territory that almost brought them all the way back. Sampang and Alex Ocampo led Eagle Construction's charge with 18 points apiece, while Ed Cosino and Alegre pumped in 16 each for good measure. MDC's Fradel Sedillo led all scorers with 23 points with Catalla adding 22 of his own. It was the second straight win for Eagle Construction after starting 0-4, while MDC dropped to 3-4.

NAPA Auto overcame a 43-point explosion by "Smoking" Jun Tabora to repeat over DECM in the nightcap, 88-80. Jorge De Guzman led the victors with 29 points with sharpshooter James Abuy adding 22 points. Joseph Galulu and Jay Gatdula supported Tabora's season-high with 12 and 11 markers, respectively. NAPA Auto's win was the fifth in seven games, while the loss was the fourth in seven games for DECM.

First Game

Blue Haus 93 – J. Santos 36, Diaz 21, Peredo 14, Elchico 6, Culala 4, Buenabajo 4, Alano 4, Esdrelon 3, Samson 2.

Magalahi Eagles 84 – Odicta 29, Cortez 22, Aniciete 11, Brillo 10, Claveria 7, Bong 6, Ronald 5.

Scoring by quarters: 21-17, 37-35, 58-57, 93-84.

Second Game

Eagle Construction 97 – Sampang 18, Ocampo 18, Cosino 16, Alegre 16, Umali 15, Surima 7, Garcia 4, Jacob 4.

MDC 95 – Sedillo 23, Catalla 22, Tolentino 17, Calbone 9, Quemado 9, Saplan 6, Manipon 2, Sanguyo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-13, 53-41, 67-64, 97-95.

Third Game

NAPA Auto 88 – De Guzman 28, Abuy 22, Tabora 10, Montano 9, Ebuen 8, Bartolo 5, Tobias 4, De Jesus 2.

DECM 80 – Tabora 43, Galulu 12, Ja. Gatdula 11, Calungsang 6, Joson 6, Salazar 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-26, 41-44, 62-49, 88-80.

ROUNDS

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treatment.

"He's done with surgery now and we wait for radiation treatment. He will go through 30 sessions of radiation, Monday to Friday, 20 minutes a day," Pat said in a social media to *Saipan Tribune*.

It can be recalled that the Kabiriels set up a gofundme account to raise money for the multi-sports athlete, who is a legend in the islands' running circles and most recently represented the CNMI in triathlon and *va'a*. Ultimately, a total of 57 people donated $5,365 toward Kabiriel's medical care.

"We were able to get half, but that half was a big help too for his medications and food as he's not yet able to eat by mouth. Thank you so much we are so grateful for all of your help!"

Asked how the athlete known as the "Roadrunner Bunny" and in the business community as the "Safety Guy" feels post-surgery, Pat said his husband is trying his best to keep a positive attitude.

"Some days are good, some days are bad, but if we allow it to get the best of us, then we will never reach the finish line. Right now, he's in good spirits. He's a fighter. He said his cancer treatment is like running. You have to challenge yourself to be better and you have to have a positive mind to overcome the challenges," she said.

Pat also requested that family members, friends, and those in the islands' tight sports community to continue to pray for Ketson and their family during these trying times.

"He would like to thank each and every one for their support, prayers, and words of encouragement most especially to friends and families and our kids. But most of all he thanks everyone for taking care of him. Nothing would be possible without God. You just need to have faith, believe in him, and give it all to him take care of it."

The Kabiriels have four children—Kaden, K.J., Gabby, and Koen. Their nephew, Dennis, is also considered part of the family.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	47	28	.627	—
Philadelphia	46	28	.622	½
Toronto	42	32	.568	4½
Brooklyn	39	36	.520	8
New York	33	42	.440	14

Southeast Division

y-Miami	47	28	.627	—
Charlotte	39	36	.520	8
Atlanta	37	37	.500	9½
Washington	32	42	.432	14½
Orlando	20	55	.267	27

Central Division

Milwaukee	46	28	.622	—
Chicago	43	31	.581	3
Cleveland	41	33	.554	5
Indiana	25	50	.333	21½
Detroit	20	55	.267	26½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-Memphis	52	23	.693	—
Dallas	46	29	.613	6
New Orleans	32	43	.427	20
San Antonio	30	44	.405	21½
Houston	20	55	.267	32

Northwest Division

Utah	45	30	.600	—
Denver	44	31	.587	1
Minnesota	43	33	.566	2½
Portland	27	47	.365	17½
Oklahoma City	21	53	.284	23½

Pacific Division

z-Phoenix	61	14	.813	—
Golden State	48	27	.640	13
L.A. Clippers	36	39	.480	25
L.A. Lakers	31	43	.419	29½
Sacramento	27	48	.360	34

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division
z-clinched conference

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Carolina ousts Peacocks, sets up Final Four Duke clash

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Saipan Marathon 2022 registration closes on April 1

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Woo, Elliot dominate open singles finals

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Top seeds Jimin Woo and Hye Jin Elliot outdueled familiar foes to win the men's and women's open singles, respectively, of the Bridge Capital Tennis Classic last Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

Woo beat second seed Colin Ramsey in the championship round anew in straight sets, 6-2, 6-3. Last month, the senior at Saipan International School also bested Ramsey in the men's singles finals of the 2021 White Coconut Tennis Classic.

It was a complete 180-degree turnaround for Woo as the day before the finals he struggled against Moris Villanueva in their semis matchup. With an apparent lower back injury, the 17-year-old needed a super tiebreaker to escape the upset axe, 6-1, 4-6, 10-5.

"I was able to serve normally when playing Colin so I was able to win more service games that match than against Moris," he said after the championship game.

Woo said his lower back was really bothering him in the semifinals and it affected his movement on the tennis court.

"I took pain killers during the match and hit my serves very slowly. I was thinking about going underhand, but I felt that I could manage without serving it that way. My lower back was hurting when I served," he said.

Ramsey booked a final tickets after overcoming No. 3 seed Sam Ryu, 6-2, 6-1. Earlier, he took out Tomas

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MARK RABAGO

Jimin Woo, left, and Hye Jin Elliot won the men's and women's open singles, respectively, of the Bridge Capital Tennis Classic last Sunday at the American Memorial Park.

Blue Haus outlasts improving Magalahi Eagles

MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

In a game where the top met the bottom, Blu Haus was lucky to keep its unbeaten record in the masters division after Magalahi Eagles gave them all they could handle in a 93-84 win in the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

Blue Haus probably relaxed a bit knowing their opponents haven't tasted victory in their past four games. Magalahi Eagles, however, have shown great improvement and it showed as they only trailed by 4 points, 21-17, after the first quarter against the league-leaders.

Ryan Odicta made his best Stephen Curry impression with three connections from the land of plenty in the opening period.

The underdogs continued to give Blue Haus a lot of fits come the second quarter as everyone up and down the roster scored and Magalahi Eagles miraculously found themselves down by just a deuce, 37-35, at halftime.

Odicta then joined hands with Dennis Cortez and Jerald Aniciete as the third quarter rolled on. The trio scored 11 points in the period, while the rest of their teammates played solid defense against Blue Haus' second-stringers. As a result, Magalahi Eagles were able to take a 58-57 lead going into the final 10 minutes of action.

Blu Haus finally unleashed the dogs on Magalahi Eagles in the payoff period as John Santos and Tony Diaz were reinserted in the lineup. With the 3-point shooters on the court, Magalahi Eagles were outscored aplenty and all their upset hopes went out the window.

Santos scored a game-high 36 points—18 in the fourth—with Diaz and Richard Peredo adding 21 and 14 markers apiece. Odicta and Cortez

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MARK RABAGO

Blu Haus' Richard Peredo drives against a Magalahi Eagles player in their masters division game in the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

Rounds of radiation treatment next for Ketson

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel is now on to the next round of treatment for stage 2 oral cancer after undergoing successful earlier this month in Los Angeles.

The three-time Northern Marianas Sports Association Male Athlete of the Year got his cancer diagnosis last December and he and his wife, Pat, flew to California to seek

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Three-time NMSA Athlete of the Year Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and his wife, Pat, in this undated photo.